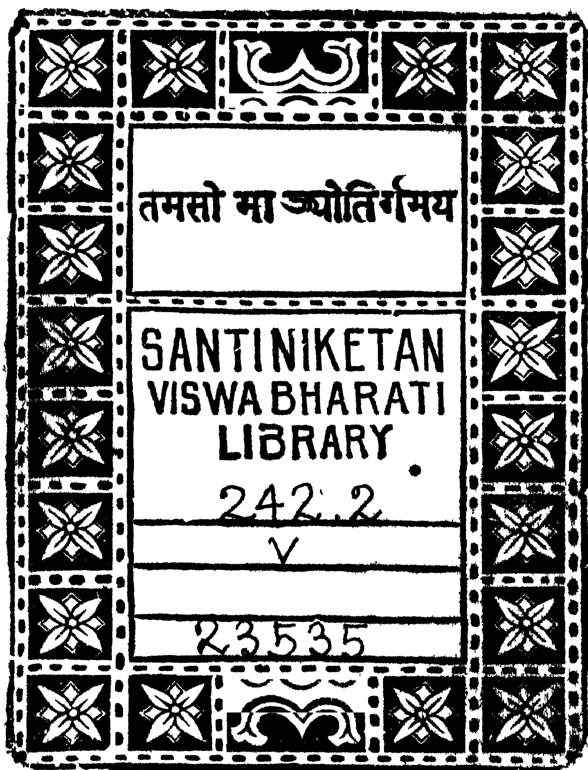


THOUGHTS ON VEDANTA

BY

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.



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Swami Vivekananda.

THOUGHTS ON VEDANTA.



THE VEDANTA PHILOSOPHY.

The Vedanta philosophy, as it is generally called at the present day, really comprises all the various sects that now exist in India. Thus there have been various interpretations, and to my mind they have been progressive, beginning with the dualistic or Dvaita and ending with the non-dualistic or Advaita. The word *Vedanta* literally means the end of the Vedas,—the Vedas being the scriptures of the Hindus.*

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* The Vedas are divided mainly in two portions: the Karmakanda and the Jnanakanda,—the work-portion and the knowledge-portion To the Karmakanda belong the famous hymns and the rituals or Brahmanas. Those books which treat of spiritual matters apart from ceremonials, are called Upanishads. The Upanishads belong to the Jnanakanda, or knowledge-portion. It is not that all the Upanishads came to be composed as a separate portion of the Vedas. Some are interspersed among the rituals.

Sometimes in the West, by the Vedas are meant only the hymns and rituals of the Vedas. But at the present time these parts have almost gone out of use, and usually by the word *Vedas* in India, the Vedanta is meant. All our commentators, when they want to quote a passage from the scriptures, as a rule quote from the Vedanta, which has another technical name with the commentators—the Shrutis.* Now all the books known by the name of the Vedanta were not entirely written after the ritualistic portions of the Vedas. For instance, one of them—the Isha Upanishad—forms the fortieth chapter of the Yajur Veda, that being the oldest part of the Vedas. There are other

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and at least one is in the Samhita or hymn-portion. Sometimes the term *Upanishads* is applied to books which are not included in the Vedas,—e. g. the Gita; but as a rule it is applied to the philosophical treatises scattered through the Vedas. These treatises have been collected, and are called the Vedanta.

* The term *Shruti*,—meaning "that which is heard,"—though including the whole of the Vedic literature, is chiefly applied by the commentators to the Upanishads.

Upanishads* which form portions of the Brâhmanas or ritualistic writings; and the rest of the Upanishads are independent, not comprised in any of the Brâhmanas or other parts of the Vedas; but there is no reason to suppose that they were entirely independent of other parts, for, as we well know, many of these have been lost entirely, and many of the Brâhmanas have become extinct. So it is quite possible that the indepedent Upanishads belonged to some Brâhmanas, which in course of time fell into disuse, while the Upanishads remained. These Upanishads are also called Forest Books or Aranyakas.

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* The Upanishads are said to be one hundred and eight in number. Their dates cannot be fixed with certainty,—only it is certain that they are older than the Buddhistic movement. Though some of the minor Upanishads contain allusions indicating a later date, yet that does not prove the later date of the treatise, as, in very many cases in Sanskrit literature, the substance of a book, though of very ancient date, receives a coating, as it were, of later events in the hands of the sectarians, to exalt their particular sect.

The Vedanta, then, practically forms the scriptures of the Hindus, and all systems of philosophy that are orthodox, have to take it as their foundation. Even the Buddhists and Jains, when it suits their purpose, will quote a passage from the Vedanta as authority. All schools of philosophy in India, although they claim to have been based upon the Vedas, took different names for their systems. The last one, the system of Vyâsa, took its stand upon the doctrines of the Vedas more than the previous systems did, and made an attempt to harmonize the preceding philosophies, such as the Sankhya and the Nyâya, with the doctrines of the Vedanta. So it is especially called the Vedanta Philosophy; and the Sutras or Aphorisms of Vyâsa are, in modern India, the basis of the Vedanta Philosophy. Again, these Sutras of Vyâsa have been variously explained by different commentators. In general there are three sorts of commentators* in India now; and from

* The commentaries are of various sorts,—such as the Bhashya, Tika, Tippani, Churni, etc.,—of which all except the Bhashya are

their interpretations have arisen three systems of philosophy and sects. One is the dualistic or Dvaita; a second is the qualified non-dualistic or Vishishtadvaita; and a third is the non-dualistic or Advaita. Of these the dualistic and the qualified non-dualistic include the largest number of the Indian people. The non-dualists are comparatively few in number. Now I will try to lay before you the ideas that

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explanations of the text or difficult words in the text. The Bhashya is not properly a commentary, but the elucidation of a system of philosophy out of texts, the object being not to explain the words, but to bring out a philosophy. So the writer of a Bhashya expands his own system, taking texts as authorities for his system.

There have been various commentaries on the Vedanta. Its doctrines found their final expression in the philosophical Aphorisms of Vyasa. This treatise, called the Uttara Mimamsa, is the standard authority of Vedantism,—nay, is the most authoritative exposition of the Hindu scriptures. The most antagonistic sects have been compelled, as at were, to take up the texts of Vyasa, and harmonize them with their own philosophy. Even in very ancient times, the commentators on the Vedanta philosophy formed themselves into the three celebrated Hindu sects

are contained in all these three sects; but before going on, I will make one remark,—that these different Vedanta systems have one common psychology, and that is, the psychology of the Sankhya system. The Sankhya psychology is very much like the psychologies of the Nyâya and Vaisheshika systems, differing only in minor particulars.

All the Vedantists agree on three points. They believe in God, in the Vedas as revealed, and in cycles. We have already considered the Vedas. The belief about cycles is as follows:—All matter throughout the universe is the outcome of one primal matter called

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of dualists, qualified non-dualists, and non-dualists. The ancient commentaries are perhaps lost; but they have been revived in modern times by the post-Buddhistic commentators, Shankara, Ramanuja, and Madhava. Shankara revived the non-dualistic form Ramanuja, the qualified non-dualistic form of the ancient commentator Bodhayana, and Madhava, the dualistic form. In India the sects differ mainly in their philosophy; the difference in rituals is slight, the basis of their philosophy and religion being the same.

Akasha; and all force, whether gravitation, attraction or repulsion, or life, is the outcome of one primal force called Prana. Prana acting on Akasha is creating or projecting* the universe. At the beginning of a cycle, Akasha is motionless, unmanifested. Then Prana begins to act, more and more, creating grosser and grosser forms out of Akasha,—plants, animals, men, stars, and so on. After an incalculable time this evolution ceases and involution begins, everything being resolved back through finer and finer forms into the original Akasha and Prana, when a new cycle follows. Now there is something beyond Akasha and Prana. Both can be resolved into a third thing called Mahat,—the Cosmic Mind. This Cosmic Mind does not create Akasha and Prana, but changes itself into them.

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* The word which is "creation" in your language is in Sanskrit exactly "projection," because there is no sect in India which believes in creation as it is regarded in the West,—a something coming out of nothing. What we mean by creation is projection of that which already existed.

We will now take up the beliefs about mind, soul and God. According to the universally accepted Sankhya psychology, in perception,—in the case of vision, for instance,—there are, first of all, the instruments or Karanas of vision,—the eyes. Behind the instruments—the eyes—is the organ of vision or Indriya,—the optic nerve and its centres,—which is not the external instrument, but without which the eyes will not see. More still is needed for perception. The mind or Manas must come and attach itself to the organ. And besides this, the sensation must be carried to the intellect or Buddhi,—the determinative, reactive state of the mind. When the reaction comes from Buddhi, along with it flashes the external world and egoism. Here then is the will; but everything is not complete. Just as every picture, being composed of successive impulses of light, must be united on something stationary to form a whole, so all the ideas in the mind must be gathered and projected on something

that is stationary—relatively to the body and mind,—that is, on what is called the Soul or Purusha or Atman.

According to the Sankhya philosophy, the reactive state of the mind called Buddhi or intellect, is the outcome, the change, or a certain manifestation of the Mahat or Cosmic Mind. The Mahat becomes changed into vibrating thought; and that becomes in one part changed into the organs, and in the other part into the fine particles of matter. Out of the combination of all these, the whole of this universe, is produced. Behind even Mahat, the Sankhya conceives of a certain state which is called Avyaktam or unmanifested, where even the manifestation of mind is not present, but only the causes exist. It is also called Prakriti. Beyond this Prakriti, and eternally separate from it, is the Purusha, the Soul of the Sankhya, which is without attributes and omnipresent. The Purusha is not the doer but the witness. The illustration of the crystal is used to explain

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the Purusha. The latter is said to be like a crystal without any color, before which different colors are placed, and then it seems to be colored by the colors before it, but in reality it is not. The Vedantists reject the Sankhya ideas of the soul and nature. They claim that between them there is a huge gulf to be bridged over. On the one hand the Sankhya system comes to nature, and then at once it has to jump over to the other side and come to the soul, which is entirely separate from nature. How can these different colors, as the Sankhya calls them, be able to act on that soul which by its nature is colorless ? So the Vedantists, from the very first, affirm that this soul and this nature are one. * Even the dualistic

* The Vedanta and the Sankhya philosophy are very little opposed to each other. The Vedanta God developed out of the Sankhya's Purusha. All the systems take up the psychology of the Sankhya. Both the Vedanta and the Sankhya believe in the infinite soul, only the Sankhya believes there are many souls. According to the Sankhya, this universe does not require any explanation from outside. The Vedanta believes there

Vedantists admit that the Atman or God is not only the efficient cause of this universe, but also the material cause. But they only say so in so many words. They do not really mean it, for they try to escape from their conclusions, in this way. They say there are three existences in this universe,—God, soul and nature. Nature and soul are, as it were, the body of God, and in this sense it may be said that God and the whole universe are one. But this nature and all these various souls remain different from each other through all eternity. Only at the beginning of a cycle do they become manifest; and when the cycle ends, they become fine, and remain in a fine state. The Advaita Vedantists —the non-dualists—reject this theory of the soul, and, having nearly the whole range of the Upanishads in their favor, build their philosophy entirely upon them. All the books contained in the Upanishads have one subject,

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is the one Soul, which appears as many; and we build on the Sankhya's analysis.

one task before them,—to prove the following theme: "Just as by the knowledge of one lump of clay we have the knowledge of all the clay in the universe, so what is that, knowing which we know everything in the universe?" The idea of the Advaitists is to generalize the whole universe into one,—that something which is really the whole of this universe. And they claim that this whole universe is one, that it is one Being manifesting itself in all these various forms. They admit that what the Sankhya calls nature, exists, but say that nature is God. It is this Being, the Sat, which has become converted into all this,—the universe, man, soul, and everything that exists. Mind and Mahat are but the manifestations of that one Sat. But then the difficulty arises that this would be pantheism. How came that Sat which is unchangeable, as they admit (for that which is absolute is unchangeable), to be changed into that which is changeable and perishable? The Advaitists here have a

theory which they call Vivarta Vâda or apparent manifestation. According to the dualists and the Sankhyas, the whole of this universe is the evolution of primal nature. According to some of the Advaitists and some of the dualists, the whole of this universe is evolved from God. And according to the Advaitists proper, the followers of Shankaracharya, the whole universe is the *apparent* evolution of God. God is the material cause of this universe, but not really, only apparently. The celebrated illustration used, is that of the rope and the snake, where the rope appeared to be the snake, but was not really so. The rope did not really change into the snake. Even so this whole universe as it exists, is that Being. It is unchanged, and all the changes we see in it are only apparent. These changes are caused by Desha, Kâla, and Nimitta (space, time, and causation), or, according to a higher psychological generalisation, by Nâma and Rupa (name and form). It is by name and

form that one thing is differentiated from another. The name and form alone cause the difference. In reality they are one and the same. Again, it is not, the Vedantists say, that there is something as phenomenon and something as noumenon. The rope is changed into the snake apparently only; and when the delusion ceases, the snake vanishes. When one is in ignorance, he sees the phenomenon and does not see God. When he sees God, this universe vanishes entirely for him. Ignorance or Maya, as it is called, is the cause of all this phenomenon,—the Absolute, the Unchangeable, being taken as this manifested universe. This Maya is not absolute zero, not non-existence. It is defined as neither existence nor non-existence. It is not existence, because that can be said only of the Absolute, the Unchangeable, and in this sence, Maya is non-existence. Again it cannot be said it is non-existence; for if it were, it could never produce the phenomenon. So it is something which

is neither; and in the Vedanta philosophy it is called Anirvachaniya or inexpressible. Maya then is the real cause of this universe. Maya gives the name and form to what Brahman or God gives the material; and the latter seems to have been transformed into all this. The Advaitists, then, have no place for the individual soul. They say individual souls are created by Maya. In reality they cannot exist. If there were only one existence throughout, how could it be that I am one, and you are one, and so forth? We are all one, and the cause of evil is the perception of duality. As soon as I begin to feel that I am separate from this universe, then first comes fear, and then comes misery. "Where one hears another, one sees another, that is small. Where one does not see another, where one does not hear another, that is the greatest, that is God. In that greatest is perfect happiness. In small things there is no happiness."

According to the Advaita philosophy, then, this differentiation of matter, these phenomena, are, as it were, for a time, hiding the real nature of man; but the latter really has not been changed at all. In the lowest worm, as well as in the highest human being, the same divine nature is present. The worm form is the lower form in which the divinity has been more over-shadowed by Maya; that is the highest form in which it has been least overshadowed. Behind everything the same divinity is existing, and out of this comes the basis of morality. Do not injure another. Love every one as your own self, because the whole universe is one. In injuring another, I am injuring myself; in loving another, I am loving myself. From this also springs that principle of Advaita morality which has been summed up in one word,—self-abnegation. The Advaitist says this little personalized self is the cause of all my misery. This individualized self, which makes me different from all other beings, brings hatred

and jealousy and misery, struggles and all other evils. And when this idea has been got rid of, all struggle will cease, all misery vanish. So this is to be given up. We must always hold ourselves ready, even to give up our lives for the lowest beings. When a man has become ready even to give up his life for a little insect, he has reached the perfection which the Advaitist wants to attain; and at that moment when he has become thus ready, the veil of ignorance falls away from him, and he will feel his own nature. Even in this life, he will feel that he is one with the universe. For a time, as it were, the whole of this phenomenal world will disappear for him, and he will realize what he is. But so long as the Karma of this body remains, he will have to live. This state, when the veil has vanished and yet the body remains for some time, is what the Vedantists call the Jivan Mukti, the living freedom. If a man is deluded by a mirage for sometime, and one day the mirage disappears,—if it comes back again the next

day or at some future time, he will not be deluded. Before the mirage first broke, the man could not distinguish between the reality and the deception. But when it has once broken, as long as he has organs and eyes to work with, he will see the image, but will no more be deluded. That fine distinction between the actual world and the mirage, he has caught, and the latter cannot delude him any more. So when the Vedantist has realized his own nature, the whole world has vanished for him. It will come back again, but no more the same world of misery. The prison of misery has become changed into Sat, Chit, Ananda,—Existence Absolute, Knowledge Absolute, Bliss Absolute,—and the attainment of this is the goal of the Advaita Philosophy.*

* The above address was delivered before the Graduate Philosophical Society of Harvard University, on March 25th, 1896.

VEDANTA AS A FACTOR IN CIVILISATION.

(Extract from an address delivered at Airlie-lodge, Ridgway-gardens, England.)

People, who are capable of seeing only the gross external aspect of things, can perceive in the Indian nation only a conquered and suffering people, a race of dreamers and philosophers. They seem to be incapable of perceiving that in the spiritual realm, India conquers the world. No doubt it is true, that just as the too active Western mind would profit by an admixture of Eastern introspection and the meditative habit, so the Eastern would benefit by a somewhat greater activity and energy. Still we must ask, what may be that Force which causes this afflicted and suffering people, the Hindu, and the Jewish too (the two races from which have originated all the great religions of the world), to survive, when other nations perish? The cause can only be their Spiritual Force. The Hindus are still living though silent, the Jews are more numerous to-day than when they lived

in Palestine. The philosophy of India percolates throughout the whole civilised world, modifying and permeating as it goes. So also in ancient times, her trade reached the shores of Africa, before Europe was known, and opened communication with the rest of the world, thus disproving the belief that Indians never went outside of their own country. It is remarkable also, that the possession of India by a foreign power, has always been a turning-point in the history of that power, bringing to it wealth, prosperity, dominion and spiritual ideas. While the Western man tries to measure how much it is possible for him to possess and to enjoy, the Eastern seems to take the opposite course, and to measure how little of material possessions he can do with. In the Vedas we trace the endeavour of that ancient people to find God. In their search for Him they came upon different strata; beginning with ancestor worship, they passed on to the worship of Agni, the fire-god, of Indra, the god of thunder, and of Varuna, the

God of gods. We find the growth of this idea of God, from many gods to one God in all religions; its real meaning is, that He is the chief of the tribal gods, Who creates the world, rules it and sees into every heart; the stages of growth lead up from a multiplicity of gods to monotheism. This anthropomorphic conception, however, did not satisfy the Hindus, it was too human for them who were seeking the Divine. Therefore they finally gave up searching for God in the outer world of sense and matter, and turned their attention to the inner world. Is there an inner world? And what is it? It is *Atman*, It is the Self, It is the only thing an individual can be sure of. If he knows himself, he can know the universe; and not otherwise. The same question was asked in the beginning of time, even in the Rig-Veda, in another form: 'Who or what existed from the beginning?' That question was gradually solved by the Vedanta philosophy. The *Atman* existed. That is to say, what we call the Absolute, the

Universal Soul, the Self, is the Force by which from the beginning, all things have been and are and will be manifested. While the Vedanta philosophers solved that question, they at the same time discovered the basis of ethics. Though all religions have taught ethical precepts, such as, 'Do not kill, do not injure; love your neighbour as yourself,' etc., yet none of these have given the reason. 'Why should I not injure my neighbour?' To this question there was no satisfactory or conclusive answer forthcoming, until it was evolved by the metaphysical speculations of the Hindus, who could not rest satisfied with mere dogmas. So the Hindus say, that this *Atman* is absolute and all-pervading, therefore infinite. There cannot be two infinites for they would limit each other and would become finite. Also each individual soul is a part and parcel of that Universal Soul, which is infinite. Therefore in injuring his neighbour, the individual actually injures himself. This is the basic metaphysical truth

underlying all ethical codes. It is too often believed that a person in his progress towards perfection, passes from error to truth; that when he rejects one thought for another, he must necessarily reject the first. But no error can lead to truth. The soul passing through its different stages goes from truth to truth, and each stage is true; it goes from lower truth to higher truth. This point may be illustrated in the following way. A man is journeying towards the sun and takes a photograph at each step. How different would be the first photograph from the second and still more from the third or the last, when he reaches the real sun? But all these, though differing so widely from each other, are true, only they are made to appear different by the changing conditions of time and space. It is the recognition of this truth, which has enabled the Hindus to perceive the universal truth of all religions, from the lowest to the highest; it has made of them the only people who never had religious persecutions. The shrine

of a Mahomedan saint, which is at the present day neglected and forgotten by Mahomedans, is worshipped by Hindus! Many instances may be quoted, illustrating the same spirit of tolerance. The Eastern mind could not rest satisfied till it had found that goal which is the end sought by all humanity, namely, Unity. The Western scientist seeks for unity in the atom or the molecule. When he finds it, there is nothing further for him to discover, and so when we find that Unity of Soul or Self, which is called *Atman*, we can go no further. It becomes clear that everything in the sense-world is a manifestation of that One Substance. Further, the scientist is brought to the necessity of recognising metaphysics, when he supposes that atoms having neither breadth nor length yet become, when combined, the cause of extension, length and breadth. When one atom acts upon another, some medium is necessary. What is that medium? It will be a third atom. If so, then the question still remains unanswered, for

how do these two act on the third? A manifest *reductio ad absurdum.* This contradiction in terms, is also found in the hypothesis necessary to all physical science, that a point is that which has neither parts nor magnitude, and line, has length without breadth. These cannot be either seen or conceived. Why? Because they do not come within the range of the senses. They are metaphysical conceptions. So we see, it is finally the mind which gives the form to all perception. When I see, a chair, it is not the real chair external to my eye which I perceive, but an external something plus the mental image formed. Thus even the materialist is driven to metaphysics in the last extremity.

THE SPIRIT AND INFLUENCE OF VEDANTA.

(Delivered at the Twentieth Century Club of Boston, America.)

Before going into the subject of this afternoon, will you allow me to say a few words of thanks now that I have the opportunity. I have lived three years amongst you. I have travelled over nearly the whole of America, and as I am going back from here to my own country, it is meet that I should take this opportunity of expressing my gratitude in this Athens of America. When I first came to this country, after a few days, I thought I would be able to write a book on the nation. But after three years' stay here, I find I am not able to write even a page. On the other hand, I find in travelling in various countries that, beneath the surface differences that we find in dress and food, and little details of manners, man is man all the world over; the same wonderful human nature is everywhere represented. Yet there are certain characteristics,

and in a few words I would like to sum up all my experiences here. In this land of America, no question is asked about a man's peculiarities. If a man is a man, that is enough, and they take him into their hearts, and that is one thing I have never seen in any other country in the world.

I came here to represent a philosophy of India, which is called, the Vedanta philosophy. This philosophy is very, very ancient; it is the outcome of that mass of ancient Aryan literature known by the name of the Vedas. It is, as it were, the very flower of all the speculations and experiences and analyses embodied in that mass of literature,—collected and culled through centuries. This Vedanta philosophy has certain peculiarities. In the first place, it is perfectly impersonal; it does not owe its origin to any person or prophet; it does not build itself around one man as a centre. Yet it has nothing to say against philosophies, which do build themselves around certain persons. In

later days in India, other philosophies and systems arose, built around certain persons,—such as Buddhism, or many of our present sects. They each have a certain leader to whom they owe allegiance, just as the Christians and Mahomedans have. But the Vedanta philoshphy stands as the background of all these various sects, and there is no fight and no antagonism between the Vedanta and any other system in the world.

One principle it lays down—and that, the Vedanta claims, is to be found in every religion in the world—that man is divine, that all this, which we see around us is the outcome of that consciousness of the divine. Everything that is strong, and good, and powerful in human nature is the outcome of that divinity, and though potential in many, there is no difference between man and man essentially, all being alike divine. There is, as it were, an infinite ocean behind, and you and I are so many waves, coming out of that infinite ocean; and each one of us is trying our best to manifest that

infinity outside. So, potentially, each one of us has that infinite ocean of Existence, Knowledge, and Bliss as our birthright, our real nature; and the difference between us is caused by the greater or lesser power to manifest that divine. Therefore the Vedanta lays down that each man should be treated not as what he manifests, but as what he stands for. Each human being stands for the divine, and therefore every teacher should be helpful, not by condemning man, but by helping him to call forth the divinity that is within him.

It also teaches, that all the vast mass of energy that we see displayed in society and in every plane of action, is really from inside out; and therefore what is called inspiration by other sects, the Vedantist begs the liberty to call the *expiration* of man. At the same time it does not quarrel with other sects; the Vedanta has no quarrel with those who do not understand this divinity of man. Consciously or unconsciously, every man is trying to unfold that divinity.

Man is like an infinite spring, coiled up in a small box, and that spring is trying to unfold itself; and all the social phenomena that we see are the result of this trying to unfold; and all the competitions and struggles and evils that we see around us, are neither the causes of these unfoldments nor the effects. As one of our great philosophers says,—in the case of the irrigation of a field, the tank is somewhere up on a higher level, and the water is trying to rush into the field, and is barred by a gate. But as soon as the gate is opend, the water rushes in by its own nature; and if there is dust and dirt in the way, the water rolls over them. But dust and dirt are neither the result nor the cause of this unfolding of the divine nature of man. They are co-existent circumstances, and therefore can be remedied.

Now, this idea, claims the Vedanta, is to be found in every religion, whether in India or outside of it; only in some of them, the idea is expressed through mythology, and in others,

through symbology. They claim that there has not been one religious inspiration, one manifestation of the divine man, however great, but it has been the expression of that infinite oneness in human nature; and all that we call ethics and morality and doing good to others, is also but the manifestation of this oneness. There are moments, when every man feels that he is one with the universe, and he rushes forth to express it, whether he knows it or not. This expression of oneness, is what we call love and sympathy, and it is the basis of all our ethics and morality. This is summed up in the Vedanta philosophy, by the celebrated aphorism, *Tat tvam asi,* "Thou art That."

To every man, this is taught: Thou art one with this Universal Being, and, as such, every soul that exists, is your soul; and every body that exists, is your body; and in hurting any one, you hurt yourself, in loving any one, you love yourself. As soon as a current of hatred is thrown outside, whomsoever else it

hurts, it also hurts yourself; and if love comes out from you, it is bound to come back to you. For I am the universe; this universe is my body. I am the Infinite, only I am not conscious of it now; but I am struggling to get this consciousness of the Infinite, and perfection will be reached when full consciousness of this Infinite comes.

Another peculiar idea of the Vedanta is, that we must allow this infinite variation in religious thought, and not try to bring everybody to the same opinion, because the goal is the same; as the Vedantist says in his poetical language:

"As so many rivers, having their source in different mountains, roll down, crooked or straight, and at last come into the ocean,—so, all these various creeds and religions, taking their start from different stand-points and running through crooked or straight courses, at last come unto THEE."

As a manifestation of that, we find that this most ancient philosophy has, through its in-

fluence, directly inspired Buddhism, the first missionary religion of the world and indirectly, it has also influenced Christianity, through the Alexandrians, the Gnostics, and the European philosophers of the middle ages. And later, influencing German thought, it has produced almost a revolution in the regions of philosophy and psychology. Yet all this mass of influence has been given to the world almost unperceived. As the gentle falling of the dews at night, brings support to all vegetable life, so, slowly and imperceptibly this divine philosophy has been spread through the world for the good of mankind. No march of armies has been used to preach this religion. In Bud lhism, one of the most missionary religions of the world, we find inscriptions remaining of the great Emperor Asoka,—recording how missionaries were sent to Alexandria, to Antioch, to Persia, to China, and to various other countries of the then civilized world. Three hundred years before Christ, instructions were given them not to

revile other religions: "The basis of all religions is the same, wherever they are; try to help them all you can, teach them all you can, but do not try to injure them."

Thus in India there never was any religious persecution by the Hindus, but only that wonderful reverence, which they have for all the religions of the world. They sheltered a portion of the Hebrews, when they were driven out of their own country; and the Malabar Jews remain as a result. They received at another time, the remnant of the Persians, when they were almost annihilated; and they remain to this day, as a part of us and loved by us, as the modern Parsees, of Bombay. There were Christians who claimed to have come with St. Thomas, the disciple of Jesus Christ; and they were allowed to settle in India and hold their own opinions; and a colony of them is even now in existence in India. And this spirit of toleration has not died out. It will not and cannot die there.

This is one of the great lessons that the Vedanta has to teach. Knowing that consciously or unconsciously we are struggling to reach the same goal, why should we be impatient? If one man is slower than another, we need not be impatient, we need not curse him or revile him. When our eyes are opened and the heart is purified,—the work of the same divine influence, the unfolding of the same divinity in every human heart, will become manifest; and then alone, we shall be in a position to claim the brotherhood of man.

When a man has reached the highest, when he sees neither man nor woman, neither sex, nor creed, nor color, nor birth, nor any of these differentiations, but goes beyond and finds that divinity which is the real man behind every human being,—then alone, he has reached the universal brotherhood, and that man alone is a VEDANTIST.

Such are some of the practical historical results of the Vedanta.

VEDANTA AND PRIVILEGE.

(Delivered in London.)

We have nearly finished the metaphysical portion of the Advaita. One point, and perhaps the most difficult to understand, remains. We have seen so far that according to the Advaita theory, all we see around us, and the whole universe in fact, is the evolution of that one Absolute. This is called, in Sanskrit, Brahman. The Absolute has become changed into the whole of nature. But here comes a difficulty. How is it possible for the Absolute to change? What made the Absolute to change? By its very definition, the Absolute is unchangeable. Change of the unchangeable would be a contradiction. The same difficulty applies to those who believe in a Personal God. For instance, how did this creation arise. It could not have arisen out of nothing; that would be a contradiction; something coming out of nothing, can never be. The effect is the cause in another form. Out of the seed, the big tree grows; the tree is the

seed, plus air and water taken in. And if there were any method of testing the amount of the air and water taken to make the body of the tree, we should find that it is exactly the same as the effect, the tree. Modern science has proved beyond doubt that it is so, that the cause is the effect in another form. The adjustment of the parts of the cause changes and becomes the effect. So, we have to avoid this difficulty of having a universe without a cause, and we are bound to admit that God has become the universe.

But we have avoided one difficulty, and landed in another. In every theory, the idea of God comes, through the idea of unchangeability. We have traced historically how the one idea which we have always in mind in the search for God, even in its crudest form, is the idea of freedom; and the idea of freedom and of unchangeability are one and the same. It is the free alone which never changes, and the unchangeable alone which is free; for change is

produced by something exterior to a thing, or within itself, which is more powerful than the surroundings. Everything which can be changed is necessarily bound by certain cause or causes, which cannot be unchangeable. Supposing God has become this universe, then God is here and has changed. And suppose the Infinite has become this finite universe, so much of the Infinite has gone, and therefore God is Infinite, minus the universe. A changeable God would be no God. To avoid this doctrine of pantheism, there is a very bold theory of the Vedanta. It is that this universe, as we know and think it, does not exist, that the unchangeable has not changed, that the whole of this universe is mere appearance and not reality, that this idea of parts, and little beings, and differentiations, is only apparent, not the nature of the thing itself. God has not changed at all, and has not become the universe at all. We see God as the universe, because we have to look through time, space and causation. It

is time, space and causation that make this differentiation apparently, but not really. This is a very bold theory indeed. Now this theory ought to be explained a little more clearly. It does not mean idealism in the sense in which it is generally understood. It does not say that this universe does not exist; it exists, but at the same time, it is not what we take it for. To illustrate this the example given by the Advaita is well known. In the darkness of night, a stump of a tree is looked upon as a ghost by some superstitious person, as a policeman by a robber, as a friend by some one waiting for his companion. In all these cases, the stump of the tree did not change, but yet there are apparent changes, and these changes were in the minds of those who saw it. From the subjective side we can understand it better through psychology. There is something outside of ourselves the true nature of which is unknown and unknowable to us; let us call it "x". And there is something inside, which is also unknown and unknowable

to us; let us call it, "y". The knowable is a combination of "x+y" and everything that we know, therefore, must have two parts, the "x" outside, and the "y" inside; and the "x+y" is the thing we know. So, every form in the universe is partly our creation and partly something outside. Now what the Vedanta holds, is that this "x" and this "y", are one and the same.

A very similar conclusion has been arrived at by some Western philosophers, especially, by Herbert Spencer, and some other modern philosophers. When it is said, that the same power which is manifesting itself in the flower, is welling up in my own consciousness, it is the very same idea which the Vedantist wants to preach, that the reality of the external world and the reality of the internal world are one and the same. Even the ideas of the internal and external, exist by differentiation and do not exist in the things themselves. For instance, if we develop another sense, the whole world

will change for us, showing that it is the subject which will change the object. If I change, the external world changes. The theory of the Vedanta, therefore, comes to this, that you and I and everything in the universe are that Absolute, not parts, but the whole. You are the whole of that Absolute, and so are all others, because the idea of part cannot come into it. These divisions, these limitations, are only apparent, not in the thing itself. I am complete and perfect, and I was never bound. Boldly preaches the Vedanta, if you think you are bound, bound you will remain, if you know that you are free, free you are. Thus the end and aim of this philosophy is to let us know that we have been free always, and shall remain free for ever. We never change, we never die, and we are never born. What are all these changes then? What becomes of this phenomenal world? This world is admitted as an apparent world, bound by time, space, and causation, and it comes to what is called, the *vivarta vâda*

in Sanskrit, evolution of nature, and manifestation of the Absolute. The Absolute does not change, or re-evolve. In the little amœba is that infinite perfection latent. It is called amœba from its amœba covering, and from the amœba to the perfect man the change is not in what is inside; that remains the same, unchangeable; but the change occurs in the covering.

There is a screen here, and some beautiful scenery outside. There is a small hole in the screen through which we can only catch a glimpse of it. Suppose this hole begins to increase; as it grows larger and larger, more and more of the scenery comes into view, and when the screen has vanished, we come face to face with the whole of the scenery. This scene outside is the soul, and the screen between us and the scenery is *mâyâ*,—time, space, and causation. There is a little hole somewhere through which I can catch only a glimpse of the soul. When the hole is bigger, I see more and more, and when the screen has vanished, I know that

I am the soul. So changes in the universe are not in the Absolute; they are in nature. Nature evolves more and more, until the Absolute manifests Itself. In every one It exists; in some It is manifested more than in others; the whole universe is really one. In speaking of the Soul, to say that one is superior to another has no meaning. In speaking of the Soul, to say that man is superior to the animal or the plant, has no meaning; the whole universe is one. In plants the obstacle to Soul manifestation is very great; in animals a little less, in man still less, in cultured, spiritual men still less, and in perfect men, it has vanished altogether. All our struggles, exercises, pains, pleasures, tears, and smiles, all that we do and think tend towards that goal, the tearing up of the screen, making the hole bigger, thinning the layers that remain between the manifestation and the reality behind. Our work, therefore, is not to make the Soul free, but to get rid of the bnndages. The sun is covered by layers of clouds, but remains unaffected by

them. The work of the wind is to drive the clouds away, and the more the clouds disappear, the more the light of the sun appears. There is no change in the Soul whatsoever—Infinite, Absolute, Eternal, Knowledge, Bliss, and Existence. Neither can there be birth nor death for the Soul. Dying, and being born, reincarnation, and going to heaven, cannot be for the Soul These are different appearances, different mirages, different dreams. If a man who is dreaming of this world, now dreams of wicked thoughts and wicked deeds, after a certain time the thought of that very dream will produce the next dream. He will dream that he is in a horrible place, being tortured. The man who is dreaming good thoughts and good deeds, after that period of dream is over, will dream he is in a better place; and so on from dream to dream. But the time will come when the whole of this dream will vanish. To everyone of us there must come a time when the whole universe will be found to have been a mere dream, when

we shall find that the soul is infinitely better than its surroundings. In this struggle through what we call our environments, there will come a time when we shall find that these environments were almost zero in comparison with the power of the Soul. It is only a question of time, and time is nothing in the Infinite. It is as a drop in the ocean. We can afford to wait and be calm.

Consciously or unconsciously, therefore, the whole universe is going towards that goal. The moon is struggling to get out of the sphere of attraction of other bodies, and will come out of it, in the long run. But those who consciously strive to get free hasten the time. One benefit from this theory we practically see, is that the idea of a real, universal love is only possible from this point of view. All are our fellow passengers, our fellow travellers—all life, plants, animals; not only my brother man, but my brother brute, my brother plant; not only my brother the good, but my brother the evil, my

brother the spiritual and my brother the wicked. They are all going to the same goal. All are in the same stream, each is hurrying towards that infinite freedom ; we cannot stay the course none can stay it, none can go back, however he may try ; he will be driven forward, and in the end he will attain to freedom. Creation means the struggle to get back to freedom, the centre of our being, from whence we have been thrown off, as it were. The very fact that we are here, shows that we are going towards the centre, and the manifestation of this attraction towards the centre is what we call love.

The question is asked, from what does this universe come, in what does it remain, to what does it go back. And the answer is from love it comes, in love it remains, back it goes unto love. Thus we are in a position to understand that whether one likes it or not, there is no going back for anyone. Everyone has to get to the centre, however he may struggle to go back. Yet if we struggle consciously, knowingly,

it will smooth the passage, it will lessen the jar, and quicken the time. Another conclusion we naturally arrive at from this is, that all knowledge and all power are within and not without. What we call nature is a reflecting glass; that is all the use of nature; and all knowledge is this reflection of the within on this glass of nature. What we call powers, secrets of nature, and force, are all within. In the external world are only a series of changes. There is no knowledge in nature; all knowledge comes from the human soul. Man manifests knowledge; discovers it within himself, which is pre-existing through eternity. Everyone is the embodyment of Knowledge, everyone is the embodiment of eternal Bliss, and eternal Existence. The ethical effect is just the same, as we have seen elsewhere, with regard to equality. The idea of privilege is the bane of human life. Two forces, as it were, are constantly at work, one making caste, and the other breaking caste: in other words, the one making for privilege,

the other breaking down privilege. And whenever privilege is broken down, more and more light and progress come to a race. This struggle we see all around us. Of course there is first the brutal idea of privilege, that of the strong over the weak. There is the privilege of wealth. If a man has more money than another he wants a little privilege over those who have less. There is the still subtler and more powerful privilege of intellect: because one man knows more than others he claims more privilege. And the last of all, and the worst, because the most tyrannical, is the privilege of spirituality. If some persons think, they know more of spirituality, of God, they claim a superior privilege over everyone else. They say, "Come down and worship us, ye common herds; we are the messengers of God, and you have to worship us." None can be Vedantists, and at the same time admit of privilege to anyone, either mental physical, or spiritual; absolutely no privilege for anyone.

The same power is in every man, the one manifesting more, the other less; the same potentiality is in everyone. Where is the claim to privilege? All knowledge is in every soul, even in the most ignorant; he has not manifested it, but perhaps he has not had the opportunity; the environments were not, perhaps, suitable to him; when he gets the opportunity he will manifest it. The idea that one man is born superior to another has no meaning in the Vedanta; that between two nations one is superior and the other inferior has no meaning whatsoever. Put them in the same circumstances, and see whether the same intlligence comes out or not. Before that you have no right to say that one nation is superior to another. And as to spirituality, no privilege should be claimed there. It is a privilege to serve mankind, for this is the worship of God; God is here, in all these human souls. He is the soul of man; what privilage can men ask? There are no special messengers of God; never were, and

never can be. All beings, great or small, are equally manifestations of God; the difference is only in the manifestation. The same eternal message, which has been eternally given, comes to them little by little. The eternal message has been written in the heart of every being; it is there already, and all are struggling to express it. Some, in suitable circumstances express it a little better than others, but, as bearers of the message they are all one. What claim to superiority is there? The most ignorant man, the most ignorant child, is as great a messenger of God as any that ever existed, and as great as any that are yet to come. For the infinite message is there imprinted once for all in the heart of every being. Wherever there is a being that being contains the infinite message of the Most High. It is there. The work of the Advaita, therefore, is to break down all these privileges. It is the hardest work of all, and curious to say, it has been less active than anywhere else, in the land of its birth.

If there is any land of privilege, it is the land which gave birth to this philosophy,—privilege for the spiritual man, as well as, for the man of birth. There they have not so much privilege for money (that is one of the benefits, I think), but privilege for birth and spirituality, is everywhere.

Once a gigantic attempt was made to preach Vedantic ethics, which succeeded to a certain extent for several hundred years, and we know historically that those years were the best times of that nation. I mean, the Buddhistic attempt to break down privilege. Some of the most beautiful epithets addressed to Buddha that I remember are, "Thou the breaker of castes, destroyer of privileges, preacher of equality to all beings." So, he preached this one idea of equality. Its power has been misunderstood to a certain extent in the brotherhood of Sramans, where we find that hundreds of attempts have been made to make them into a church, with superiors and

inferiors. You cannot make much of a church when you tell people they are all gods. One of the good effects of Vedanta has been, freedom of religious thought which India enjoyed throughout all times of its history. It is something to glory in, that it is the land where there was never a religious persecution, where people are allowed perfect freedom in religion.

This practical side of Vedanta, morality, is necessary as much to-day as it ever was; more necessary, perhaps, than it ever was, for all this privilege-claiming has become tremendously intensified with the extension of knowledge. The idea of God and the devil, or Ahura Mazda and Ahriman, has a good deal of poetry in it. The difference between God and the devil is in nothing except in unselfishness and selfishness. The devil knows as much as God, is as powerful as God, only he has no holiness—that makes him a devil. Apply the same idea to the modern world;

excess of knowledge and power, without holiness, makes human beings, devils. Tremendous power is being acquired by the manufacture of machines and other appliances, and privilege is claimed to-day as it never has been claimed in the history of the world. That is why the Vedanta wants to preach against it, to break down this tyrannising over the souls of men.

Those of you who have studied the *Gita* will remember the memorable passages :—

"He who looks upon the learned Brâhmana, upon the cow, the elephant, the dog, or the outcast with the same eye, he indeed is the sage, and the wise man." "Even in this life he has conquered heaven whose mind is firm fixed on this sameness, for the Lord is one and the same to all, and the Lord is pure; therefore those who have this sameness for all, and are pure, are said to be living in God." This is the gist of Vedantic morality, this sameness, for all. We have seen that it is the subjective world that rules the objective. Change the

subject, and the object is bound to change; purify yourself, and the world is bound to be purified. This one thing requires to be taught now more than ever before. We are becoming more and more busy about our neighbours, and less and less about ourselves. The world will change if we change; if we are pure the world will become pure. The question is why I should see evil in others. I cannot see evil unless I be evil. I cannot be miserable unless I am weak. Things that used to make me miserable when I was a child, do not do so now. The subject changed, so the object was bound to change; so says the Vedanta. All these things which we call causes of misery and evil, we shall laugh at when we arrive at that wonderful state of equality, that sameness. This is what is called in Vedanta attaining to freedom. The sign of approaching that freedom is more and more of this sameness and equality.

In misery and happiness the same, in success and defeat the same; such a mind is

nearing that state of freedom. That mind cannot be easily conquered. Minds that rise into waves at the approach of every little thing, at the slightest provocation or danger, in what a state they must be! What to talk of greatness or spirituality, when these changes come over the mind? This unstable condition of the mind must be changed. We must ask ourselves how far we can be acted upon by the external world, and how far we can stand on our own feet, in spite of all the forces outside us. When we have succeeded in preventing all the forces in the world from throwing us off our balance, then alone, we have attained to freedom, and not before. That is salvation. It is here and nowhere else; it is this moment. Out of this idea, out of this fountain-head, all beautiful streams of thought have flowed upon the world, generally misunderstood in their expression, apparently contradicting each other. We find hosts of brave and wonderfully spiritual souls, in every nation, taking to caves or forests

for meditation, severing their connection with the external world. This is the one idea. And on the other hand, we find bright, illustrious beings coming into society trying to raise their fellow-men, the poor, the miserable. Apparently these two methods are contradictory. The man who lives in a cave, apart from his fellow-beings, smiles contemptuously upon those who are working for the regeneration of their fellow-men. "How foolish," he says, "what work is there? The world of *mâyâ* will always remain the world of *mâyâ*; it cannot be changed." If I ask one of our priests in India, "Do you believe in Vedanta?" He says, "That is my religion; I certainly do; that is my life." "Very well, do you admit the equality of all life, the sameness of everything?" "Certainly, I do." The next moment, when a low-caste man approaches this priest, he jumps to one side of the street to avoid that man. "Why do you jump?" "Because his very touch would have polluted me." "But you were just

saying, we are all the same, and you admit there is no difference in souls." He says, "Oh, that is in theory only for householders; when I go into a forest, then I will look upon every one as the same." You ask one of your great men in England, of great birth and wealth, if he believes as a Christian, in the brotherhood of mankind, since all came from God. He answers in the affirmative, but in five minutes he shouts something uncomplimentary about the common herd. Thus, it has been a theory only for several thousand years and never came into practice. All understand it, declare it as the truth, but when you ask them to practise it, they say, it will take millions of years.

There was a certain king who had a huge number of courtiers, and each one of these courtiers declared he was ready to sacrifice his life for his master, and that he was the most sincere being ever born. In course of time, a Sannyasin came to the king. The king

said to him that there never was a king who had so many sincere courtiers as he had. The Sannyasin smiled and said, he did not believe that. The king said, the Sannyasin could test it if he liked. So the Sannyasin declared that he would make a great sacrifice by which the king's reign would be extended very long, with the condition that there should be made a small tank into which each one of his courtiers should pour a pitcher of milk, in the dark of night. The king smiled and said, "Is this the test?" And he asked his courtiers to come to him, and told them what was to be done. They all expressed their joyful assent to the proposal and returned. In the dead of night, they came and emptied their pitchers into the tank. But in the morning, it was found full of water only. The courtiers were assembled and questioned about the matter. Each one of them had thought there would be so many pitchers of milk that his water would not be detected. Unfortunately most of us have the same idea

and we do our share of work as did the courtiers in the story.

There is so much idea of equality, says the priest, that my little privilege will not be detected. So say our rich men, so say the tyrants of every country. There is more hope for the tyrannised over, than for the tyrants. It will take a very long time for tyrants to arrive at freedom, but less time for the others. The cruelty of the fox is much more terrible than the cruelty of the lion. The lion strikes a blow and is quiet for sometime afterwards, but the fox trying persistently to follow his prey, never misses an opportunity. Priestcraft is in its nature cruel and heartless. That is why religion goes down where priestcraft arises. Says Vedanta, we must give up the idea of privilege; then will religion come. Before that there is no religion at all.

Do you believe what Christ says? "Sell all thou hast and give to the poor." Practical equality there; no trying to torture the texts,

but taking the truth as it is. Do not try to torture texts. I have heard it said that that was preached only to the handful of Jews who listened to Jesus. The same argument will apply to other things also. Do not torture texts; dare to face truth as it is. Even if we cannot reach to it, let us confess our weakness, but let us not destroy the ideal. Let us hope that we shall attain to it sometime, and strive for it. There it is—"Sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor, and follow me." Thus, trampling on every privilege and everything in us that works for privilege, let us work for that knowledge which will bring the feeling of sameness towards all mankind. You think, because you talk a little more polished language, that you are superior to the man in the street. Remember that you are thinking this, you are not going towards freedom, but are forging a fresh chain for your feet. And, above all, if the pride of spirituality enters into you, woe unto you. It is the most awful bondage that ever

existed. Neither can wealth, nor any other bondage of the human heart, bind the soul so much as this. "I am purer than others," is the most awful idea that can enter into the human heart. In what sense are you pure? The God in you is the God in all. If you have not known this, you have known nothing. How can there be difference? It is all one. Every being is the temple of the Most High; if you can see that, good, if not, spirituality has yet to come to you.

PRIVILEGE.

(Delivered at the Sesame Club, London).

Two forces seem to be working throughout nature. One of these is constantly differentiating, and the other, is as constantly unifying; the one making more and more for separate individuals, the other, as it were, bringing the individuals into a mass, bringing out sameness in the midst of all this differentiation. It seems that the action of these two forces enters into every department of nature and of human life. On the physical plane, we always find the two forces most distinctly at work, separating the individuals, making them more and more distinct from other individuals, and again making them into species and classes, and bringing out similarities of expression, and form. The same holds good as regards the social life of man. Since the time when society began, these two forces have been at work, differentiating and unifying. Their action appears in various forms,

and is called by various names, in different places, and at different times. But the essence is present in all, one making for differentiation, and the other for sameness; the one making for caste, and the other breaking it down; one making for classes and privileges, and the other destroying them.

The whole universe seems to be the battle-ground of these two forces. On the one hand, it is urged, that though this unifying process exists, we ought to resist it with all our might, because it leads towards death; that perfect unity is perfect annihilation, and that when the differentiating process, that is at work in this universe ceases, the universe comes to an end. It is differentiation that causes the phenomena that are before us; unification would reduce them all to a homogeneous and lifeless matter. Such a thing, of course, mankind wants to avoid. The same argument is applied to all the things and facts that we see arround us. It is urged that even in the physical body and

social classification, absolute sameness would produce natural death and social death. Absolute sameness of thought and feeling would produce mental decay and degeneration. Sameness, therefore, is to be avoided. This has been the argument on the one side, and it has been urged in every country and in various times, with only a change of language. Practically it is the same argument which is urged by the Brâhmanas of India, when they want to uphold the divisions and castes, when they want to uphold the principles of a certain portion of the community, against everybody else. The destruction of caste, they declare, would lead to destruction of society, and boldly they produce the historical fact, that theirs has been the longest lived society. So they, with some show of force, appeal to this argument; with some show of authority they declare that that alone which makes the individual live the longest life, must certainly be better than that which produces shorter lives.

On the other hand, the idea of oneness has had its advocates throughout all times. From the days of the Upanishads, the Buddhas and Christs, and all other great preachers of religion, down to our present day, in the new political aspirations, and in the claims of the oppressed, and the down-trodden, and of all those who find themselves bereft of privileges,—comes out, the one assertion of this unity and sameness. But human nature asserts itself. Those who have an advantage want to keep it, and if they find an argument, however one-sided and crude, they must cling to it. This applies to both sides.

Applied to metaphysics, this question also assumes another form. The Buddhist declares, that we need not look for anything which brings unity in the midst of these phenomena, we ought to be satisfied with this phenomenal world. This variety is the essence of life, however miserable and weak it may seem to be; we can have nothing more. The Vedantist

declares that unity is the only thing that exists; variety is but phenomenal, ephemeral, and apparent, "Look not to variety," says the Vedantist, "go back to unity." "Avoid unity; it is a delusion," says the Buddhist, "go to variety." The same differences of opinion in religion and metaphysics have come down to our own day, for, in fact, the sum total of the principles of knowledge, is very small. Metaphysics and metaphysical knowledge, religion and religious knowledge, reached their culmination five thousand years ago, and we are merely reiterating the same truths in different languages, only enriching them sometimes by the accession of fresh illustrations. So this is the fight, even to-day. One side wants us to keep to the phenomenal, to all this variation, and points out, with great show of argument, that variation has to remain, for when that stops, everything is gone. What we mean by life, has been caused by variation. The other side, at the same time, valiantly points to unity.

Coming to ethics, we find a tremendous departure. It is, perhaps, the only science which makes a hold departure from this fight. For ethics is unity; its basis is love. It will not look at this variation; the one aim of ethics is this unity, this sameness. The highest ethical codes that mankind has discovered up to the present time, know no variation; they have no time to stop to look into it, their one end is to make for that sameness. The Indian mind, being more analytical—I mean the Vedantic mind—found this unity. as the result of all its analysis, and wanted to base everything upon this one idea of unity, But as we have seen, in the same country, there were other minds (the Buddhistic), who could not find that unity anywhere. To them all truth was a mass of variation, there was no connection between one thing and another.

I remember a story told by Prof. Max Muller in one of his books, an old Greek story, of how a Brâhmana visited Socrates in Athens.

The Brâhmana asked, "What is the highest knowledge?" And Socrates answered—"To know man, is the end and aim of all knowledge." "But how can you know man without knowing God?" replied the Brâhmana. The one side, the Greek side, which is represented by modern Europe, insisted upon the knowledge of man; the Indian side, mostly represented by the old religions of the world, insisted upon the knowledge of God. The one sees God in nature, and the other sees nature in God. To us, at the present time, perhaps, has been given the privilege of standing aside from both these aspects, and taking an impartial view of the whole. This is a fact, that variation exists, and so it must, if life is to be. This is also a fact, that in and through these variations unity must be perceived. This is a fact that God is perceived in nature. But it is also a fact that nature is perceived in God. The knowledge of man is the highest knowledge and only by knowing man, can we know God.

This is also a fact, that the knowledge of God is the highest knowledge, and knowing God alone we can know man. Apparently contradictory though these statements may appear, they are the necessity of human nature. The whole universe is a play of unity in variety, and of variety in unity. The whole universe is a play of differentiation and oneness; the whole universe is a play of the finite in the Infinite. We cannot take one without granting the other. But we cannot take them both as facts of the same perception, as facts of the same experience; yet in this way it will always go on.

Therefore coming to our more particular purpose, which is religion, rather than ethics, a state of things where all variation has died down, giving place to a uniform, dead, homogeneity is impossible, so long as life lasts. Nor is it desirable. At the same time, there is the other side of the fact, *viz.*, that this unity already exists. That is the peculiar

claim,—not that this unity has to be made, but that it already exists, and that you could not perceive the variety at all, without it. God is not to be made, but He already exists. This has been the claim of all religions. Whenever one has perceived the finite, he has also perceived the Infinite. Some laid stress on the finite side, and declared that they perceived the finite without; others, laid stress on the Infinite side, and declared they perceived the Infinite only. But we know that it is a logical necessity that we cannot perceive the one without the other. So the claim is that this sameness, this unity, this perfection—as we may call it—is not to be made, it already exists, and is here. We have only to recognise it, to understand it. Whether we know it or not, whether we can express it in clear language or not, whether this perception assumes the force and clearness of a sense perception or not, it is there. For we are bound by the logical necessity of our

minds to confess that it is there, else, the perception of the finite would not be. I am not speaking of the old theory of substance and qualities, but of oneness; that in the midst of all this mass of phenomena, the very fact of the consciousness that you and I are different, brings to us at the same moment, the consciousness that you and I are not different. Knowledge would be impossible without that unity. Without the idea of sameness there would be neither perception nor knowledge. So both run side by side.

Therefore the absolute sameness of conditions, if that be the aim of ethics, appears to be impossible. That all men should be the same, could never be, however we might try. Men will be born differentiated; some will have more power than others; some will have natural capacities, others not; some will have perfect bodies, others not. We can never stop that. At the same time, ring in our ears, the wonderful words of morality, proclaimed by

various teachers,—"Thus, seeing the same God equally present in all, the sage does not injure Self by the Self, and thus reaches the highest goal. Even in this life they have conquered heaven whose minds are firmly fixed on this sameness; for God is pure, and God is the same to all. Therefore such are said to be living in God." We cannot deny that this is the real idea; yet at the same time comes the forms and difficulty that the sameness as regards external positions can never be attained.

But what can be attained, is elimination of privilege. That is really the work before the whole world. In all social lives, there has been that one fight in every race, and in every country. The difficulty is not that one body of men are naturally more intelligent than another, but whether this body of men, because they have the advantage of intelligence, should take away even physical enjoyment from those who do not possess that advantage. The fight is to destroy that privilege. That some wil

be stronger physically than others, and will thus naturally be able to subdue or defeat the weak, is a self-evident fact, but that, because of this strength they should gather unto themselves all the attainable happiness of this life, is not according to law, and the fight has been against it. That some people, through natural aptitude, should be able to accumulate more wealth than others, is natural; but that on account of this power to acquire wealth they should tyrannise, and ride roughshod over those who cannot acquire so much wealth, is not a part of the law, and the fight has been against that. The enjoyment of advantage over another is privilege, and throughout ages, the aim of morality has been its destruction. This is he work which tends towards sameness, towards unity, without destroying variety.

Let all these variations remain eternally; it is the very essence of life. We shall all play in this way, eternally. You will be wealthy, and I shall be poor; you will be

strong, and I shall be weak; you will be learned, and I ignorant; you will be very spiritual, and I, less so. But what of that? Let us remain so, but because you are physically or intellectually stronger, you must not have more privilege than I, and that you have more wealth, is no reason why you should be considered greater than I, for that sameness is here, in spite of the different condition.

The work of ethics has been and will be in the future, not the destruction of variation, and the establishment of sameness in the external world, which is impossible, for it would bring death and annihilation,—but to recognise the unity in spite of all these variations, to recognise the God within, in spite of everything that frightens us, to recognise that infinite strength as the property of everyone, in spite of all apparent weakness, and to recognise the eternal, infinite, essential purity of the soul in spite of everything to the contrary that appears on the surface. This, we have to recognise.

Taking one side alone, one half only of the position is dangerous, and liable to lead to quarrels. We must take the whole thing as it is, stand on it as our basis and work it out in every part of our lives, as individuals and as unit members of society.

The first group of religious ideas that we see coming up—I mean recognised religious ideas, and not the very low ideas, which do not deserve the name of religion—all include the idea of inspiration, and revealed books and so forth. The first group of religious ideas start with the idea of God. Here is the universe, and this universe is created by a certain Being. Everything that is in this universe has been created by Him. Along with that, at a later stage, comes the idea of soul,—that there is this body, and something inside this body which is not the body. This is the most primitive idea of religion that we know. We can find a few followers of that in India, but it was given up very early. The Indian religions take a peculiar start. It is only by strict analysis, and much calculation and conjecture, that we can ever think that that stage existed in Indian religions. The tangible

state in which we find them is the next step, not the first one. At the earliest step the idea of creation is very peculiar, and it is, that the whole universe is created out of zero, at the will of God; that all this universe did not exist, and out of this nothingness all this has come. In the next stage we find this conclusion is questioned. How can existence be produced out of non-existence? At the first step in the Vedanta this question is asked. If this universe is existent it must have come out of something, because it was very easy to see that nothing comes out of nothing, anywhere. All work that is done by human hands requires materials. If a house is built, the material was existing before, if a boat is made the material existed before, if any implements are made, the materials were existing before. So the effect is produced. Naturally, therefore, the first idea that this world was created out of nothing, was rejected, and some material out of which this world was created was want-

ed. The whole history of religion, in fact, is this search after material. Out of what has all this been produced? Apart from the question of the efficient cause, or God, apart from the question that God created the universe, the great question of all questions is, out of what did He create it? All the philosophies are turning, as it were, on this question. One solution is that Nature, God and soul are eternal existences, as if three lines are running parallel eternally, of which Nature and soul comprise what they call the dependent and God the independent Reality. Every soul like every particle of matter, is perfectly dependent on the will of God. Before going to the other steps we will take up the idea of soul, and then find that with all the Vedantic philosophers, there is one tremendous departure from all Western philosophy. All of them have a common psychology. Whatever their philosophy may have been, their psychology is the same in India,

the old Sankhya psychology. According to this, perception occurs by the transmission of the vibrations which first come to the external sense-organs, from the external to the internal organs, from the internal organs to the mind, from the mind, to the *buddhi*, from the *buddhi* or intellect to something which is a unit, which they call the Atman. Coming to modern physiology, we know that it has found centres for all the different sensations. First it finds the lower centres and then a higher grade of centres, and these two centres exactly correspond with the internal organs and the mind, but not one centre has been found which controls all the other centres. So physiology cannot tell what unifies all these centres. Where do the centres get united? The centres in the brain are all different, and there is not one centre which controls all the other centres; therefore, so far as it goes, the Indian psychology stands unchallenged upon this point. We must have this unification, something upon which

the sensations will be reflected, to form a complete whole. Until there is that something, I cannot have any idea of you, or a picture, or anything else. If we had not that unifying something, we would only see, then after a while, breathe, then hear, and so on, and while I heard a man talking I would not see him at all, because all the centres are different.

This body is made of particles which we call matter, and it is dull and insentient. So is what the Vedantists call, the fine body. The fine body, according to them, is a material but transparent body, made of very fine particles, so fine that no microscope can see them. What is the use of that? It is the receptacle of the fine forces. Just as this gross body is the receptacle of the gross forces, so the fine body is the receptacle of the fine forces, which we call thought, in its various modifications. First is the body, which is gross matter, with gross force. Force cannot exist without matter. It must require some matter to exist, so the

grosser forces work in the body; and those very forces become finer; the very force which is working in a gross form, works in a fine form, and becomes thought. There is no distinction between them, simply one is the gross and the other the fine manifestation of the same thing. Neither is there any distinction between this fine body and the gross body. The fine body is also material, only very fine matter; and just as this gross body is the instrument that works the gross forces, so the fine body is the instrument that works the fine forces. From where do all these forces come? According to Vedanta philosophy, there are two things in Nature, one of which they call *akasha*, which is the substance, infinitely fine, and the other they call *prana*, which is the force. Whatever you see, or feel, or hear, as air, earth, or anything, is material,—the product of *akasha*. It goes on and becomes finer and finer, or grosser and grosser, changing under the action of *prana*. Like *akasha*, *prana* is

omnipresent, and interpenetrating everything. *Akasha* is like the water, and everything else in the universe is like blocks of ice, made out of that water, and floating in the water, and *prana* is the power that changes this *akasha* into all these various forms. The gross body is the instrument made out of *akasha*, for the manifestation of *prana* in gross forms, as muscular motion, or walking, sitting, talking, and so forth. That fine body is also made of *akasha*, a very fine form of *akasha*, for the manifestation of the same *prana* in the finer form of thought. So, first there is this gross body. Beyond that, is this fine body, and beyond that, is the *jive*, the real man. Just as the nails can be pared off many times and yet are still part of our bodies, not different, so is our gross body related to the fine. It is not that a man has a fine and also a gross body; it is the one body, only the part which endures longer is the fine body, and that which dissolves soon is the gross. Just as I can cut this

nail any number of times, so, millions of times I can shed this gross body, but the fine body will remain. According to the dualists, this *jiva*, or the real man, is very fine, minute. So far we see, that man is a being, who has first a gross body, which dissolves very quickly, then a fine body which remains through æons, and then a *jiva*. This *jiva*, according to the Vedanta philosophy, is eternal, just as God is eternal. Nature is also eternal, but changefully eternal. The material of Nature, *prana* and *akasha*, is eternal, but it is changing into different forms eternally. But the *jiva* is not manufactured, either of *akasha*, or *prana*; it is immaterial and therefore will remain forever. It is not the result of any combination of *prana* and *akasha*, and whatever is not the result of combination, will never be destroyed, because destruction is going back to causes. The gross body is a compound of *akasha* and *prana* and therefore will be decomposed. The fine body will also be decomposed, after a long

time, but the *jiva* is simple, and will never be destroyed. It was never born for the same reason. Nothing simple can be born. The same argument applies. That which is a compound only can be born. The whole of Nature comprising millions and millions of souls is under the will of God. God is all-pervading, omniscient, formless, everywhere, and He is working through Nature day and night. The whole of it is under His control. He is the eternal Ruler. So say the dualists. Then the question comes, if God is the ruler of this universe, why did He create such a wicked universe, why must we suffer so much? They say, it is not God's fault. It is our fault that we suffer. Whatever we sow we reap. He did not do anything to punish us. Man is born poor, or blind, or some other way. What is the reason? He did something before he was born that way. The *jiva* has been existing for all time, was never created. It has been doing all sorts of things all the time. Whatever we do reacts

upon us. If we do good, we shall have happiness, and if evil, unhappiness. So the *jiva* goes on enjoying and suffering, and doing all sorts of things.

What comes after death? All these Vedanta philosophers admit that this *jiva* is by its own nature pure. But ignorance covers its real nature, they say. As by evil deeds it has covered itself with ignorance, so by good deeds, it becomes conscious of its own nature again. Just as it is eternal, so its nature is pure. The nature of every being is pure.

When through good deeds all its sins and misdeeds have been washed away, then the *jiva* becomes pure again and, when it becomes pure, it goes to what is called Devayana. Its organ of speech enters the mind. You cannot think without words. Wherever there is thought there must be words. As words enter the mind, so the mind is resolved into the *prana* and the *prana* into the *jiva*. Then the *jiva* gets quickly out of the body, and goes to the solar

regions. This universe has sphere after sphere. This earth is the world sphere, in which are moons, suns, and stars. Beyond that there is the solar sphere, and beyond that another which they call the lunar sphere. Beyond that, there is the sphere which they call the sphere of lightning, the electric sphere, and when the *jiva* goes there, there comes another *jiva*, already perfect, to receive it, and takes it to another world, the highest heaven, called the Brahmaloka, where the *jiva* lives eternally, no more to be born or to die. It enjoys through eternity, and gets all sorts of powers, except the power of creation. There is only one ruler of the universe, and that is God. No one can become God; the dualists maintain that if you say you are God it is a blasphemy. All powers except the creative come to the *jiva*, and if it likes to have bodies, and work in different parts of the world, it can do so. If it orders all the gods to come before it, if it wants its forefathers to come, they all appear

at its command. Such are its powers that it never feels any more pain, and if it wants, it can live in the Brahmaloka through all eternity. This is the highest man, who has attained the love of God, who has become perfectly unselfish, perfectly purified, who has given up all desires, and who does not want to do anything except worship and love God. There are others that are not so high, who do good works, but want some reward. They say they will give so much to the poor, but want to go to heaven in return. When they die, what becomes of them? The speech enters the mind, the mind enters the *prana*, the *prana* enters the *jiva*, and the *jiva* gets out, and goes to the lunar sphere, where it has a very good time for a long period. There it enjoys happiness, so long as the effect of its good deeds endures. When the same is exhausted, it descends, and once again enters life on earth according to its deserts. In the lunar sphere, the *jiva* becomes what we call a god, or what the Christians,

or Mahomedans call an angel. These gods are the names of certain positions ; for instance, Indra, the king of the gods, is the name of a position ; thousands of men get to that position. When a virtuous man who has performed the highest of Vedic rites dies, he becomes a king of the gods ; by that time the old king has gone down again, and become man. Just as kings change here, so the gods, the Devas, also have to die. In heaven they will all die. The only deathless place is Brahmaloka, where alone there is no birth and death. So the *jivas* go to heaven, and have a very good time, except now and then when the demons give them chase. In our mythology it is said there are demons, who sometimes trouble the gods. In all mythologies, you read how these demons and the gods fought, and the demons sometimes conquered the gods, although many times, it seems, the demons did not do so many wicked things as the gods. In all mythologies, for instance, you find the Devas fond of

women. So after their reward is finished, they fall down again, come through the clouds, through the rains, and thus get into some grain or plant and find their way into the human body, when the grain or plant is eaten by men. The father gives them the material out of which to get a fitting body. When the material suits them no longer, they have to manufacture other bodies. Now there are the very wicked fellows, who do all sorts of diabolical things ; they are born again as animals, and, if they are very bad, they are born very low animals, or become plants, or stones.

In the Deva form they make no karma at all ; only man makes karma. Karma means work which will produce effect. When a man dies and becomes a Deva he has only a period of pleasure, and during that time, makes no fresh karma ; it is simply a reward for his past good karma. When the good karma is worked out, then the remaining karma begins to take effect, and he comes down to earth. He

becomes man again, and if he does very good works, and purifies himself, he goes to Brahmaloka and comes back no more.

The animal is a state of sojourn for the *jiva* evolving from lower forms. In course of time the animal becomes man. It is a significant fact that as the human population is increasing, the animal population is decreasing. The animal souls are all becoming men. So many species of animals have become men already. Where else have they gone?

In the Vedas, there is no mention of hell. But our Puranas, the later books of our Scriptures, thought that no religion could be complete, unless hells were attached to it, and so they invented all sorts of hells. In some of these, men are sawed in half, and continually tortured, but do not die. They are continually feeling intense pain, but the books are merciful enough to say that it is only for a period. Bad karma is worked out in that state and then they come back on earth, and get another chance. So this

human form is the great chance. It is called the karma-body, in which we decide our fate. We are running in a huge circle, and this is the point in the circle which determines the future. So this is considered the most important form that there is; man is greater than the gods.

So far with dualism, pure and simple. Next comes the higher Vedantic Philosophy which says, that this cannot be. God is both the material and the efficient cause of this universe. If you say there is a God who is an infinite Being, a soul which is also infinite, and a Nature which is also infinite, you can go on multiplying infinities, without limit which is simply absurd; you smash all logic. So God is both the material and the efficient cause of the universe; He projects this universe out of Himself. Then how is it, that God has become these walls, and this table, that God has become the pig, and the murderer, and all the evil things in the world? We say that God is

pure. How can He become all these degenerate things? Our answer is, just as I am a soul and have a body, and in a sense, this body is not different from me, yet I, the real I, in fact, am not the body. For instance, I say, I am a child a young man, or an old man, but my soul has not changed. It remains the same soul. Similarly, the whole universe comprising all Nature, and an infinite number of souls, is, as it were, the infinite body of God. He is interpenetrating the whole of it. He alone is unchangeable, but Nature changes, and soul changes. He is unaffected by changes in Nature and soul. In what way does Nature change? In its forms; it takes fresh forms. But the soul cannot change that way. The soul contracts and expands in knowledge. It contracts by evil deeds. Those deeds which contract the real natural knowledge and purity of the soul, are called evil deeds. Those deeds, again, which bring out the natural glory of the soul, are called good deeds. All these souls were pure, but they have become con-

tracted; through the mercy of God, and by doing good deeds, they will expand and recover their natural purity. Every one has the same chance, and in the long run, must get out. But this universe will not cease, because it is eternal. This is the second theory. The first is called dualism. The second holds that there are God, soul, and Nature, and soul and Nature form the body of God, and therefore these three form one unit. It represents a higher stage of religious development and goes by the name of qualified monism. In dualism, the universe is conceived as a large machine set going by God, while in qualified monism, it is conceived as an organism, interpenetrated by the Divine Self.

The last are the non-dualists. They raise the question also, that God must be both the material and the efficient cause of this universe. As such, God has become the whole of this universe and there is no going against it. And when these other people say, that God is the

soul, and the universe is the body and the body is changing, but God is changeless, the non-dualists say, all this is nonsense. In that case what is the use of calling God the material cause of this universe? The material cause, is the cause become effect; the effect is nothing but the cause in another form. Wherever you see an effect, it is the cause reproduced. If the universe is the effect, and God the cause, it must be the reproduction of God. If you say that the universe is the body of God, and that the body becomes contracted and fine and becomes the cause, and out of that the universe is evolved, the non-dualists say that it is God Himself who has become this universe. Now comes a very fine question. If this God has become this universe, you and all these things are God. Certainly. This book is God, everything is God. My body is God, and my mind is God, and my soul is God. Then why are there so many *jivas*? Has God become divided into millions of *jivas*?

Does that one God appear as millions of *jivas* ? Then how did it become so ? How can that infinite power and substance, the one Being of the universe become divided ? It is impossible to divide infinity. How can that pure Being become this universe ? If He has become the universe, He is changeful, and if He is changeful, He is part of Nature, and whatever is Nature, and changeful, is born and dies. If our God is changeful, He must die some day. Take note of that. Again, how much of God has become this universe ? If you say X (the unknown algebraical quantity), then God is God minus X now, and therefore, not the same God as before this creation, because so much has become this universe. So the non-dualists say, "This universe does not exists at all ; it is all illusion. The whole of this universe, these Devas, gods, angels and all the other beings born and dying, all this infinite number of souls coming up and going down are all dreams." There is no *jiva*

at all. How can there be many? It is the one Infinity. As the one sun reflected on various pieces of water, appears to be many, and millions of globules of water reflect so many millions of suns, and in each globule will be a perfect image of the sun, yet there is only one sun. So, are all these *jivas* but reflections in different minds. These different minds are like so many different globules, reflecting this one Being. God is being reflected in all these different *jivas*. But a dream cannot be without a reality, and that reality, is that one Infinite Existence. You, as body, mind, or soul, are a dream, but what you really are, is Existence, Knowledge, Bliss. You are the God of this universe. You are creating the whole universe and drawing it in. Thus says the Advaitist. So all these births and rebirths, coming and going, are the figments of *Maya*. You are infinite. Where can you go? The sun, the moon, and the whole universe are but drops in your transcendent nature.

How can you be born or die? I never was born, never will be born, I never had father or mother, friends or foes, for I am Existence, Knowledge, Bliss Absolute. I am He, I am He. So, what is the goal, according to this philosophy? That those who receive this knowledge are one with the universe. For them, all heavens and even Brahmaloka are destroyed, the whole dream vanishes, and they find themselves the eternal God of the universe. They attain their real individuality with its infinite knowledge and bliss and become free. Pleasures in little things cease. We are finding pleasure in this little body, in this little individuality. How much greater the pleasure when this whole universe is my body! If there is pleasure in one body how much more when all bodies are mine. Then is freedom attained. And this is called Advaita, the non-dualistic Vedanta Philosophy.

These are the three steps which Vedanta Philosophy has taken, and we cannot go any

further, because we cannot go beyond unity. When a science reaches a unity, it cannot by any manner of means go any further. You cannot go beyond this idea of the Absolute.

All people cannot take up this Advaita philosophy; it is hard. First of all, it is very hard to understand it intellectually. It requires the sharpest of intellects, a bold understanding. Secondly, it does not suit the vast majority of people. So there are these three steps. Begin with the first one. Then by thinking of that and understanding it, the second will open itself. Just as a race advances, so individuals have to advance. The steps which the human race has taken to reach to the highest pinnacles of religious thought, every individual, will have to take. Only, while the human race took millions of years to reach from one stop to another, individuals may live the whole life of the human race in a much shorter duration. But

each one of us will have to go through these steps. Those of you who are non-dualists, look back to the period of your lives when you were strong dualists. As soon as you think you are a body and a mind, you will have to take the whole of this dream. If you take one portion you must take the whole. The man who says, here is this world, and there is no God (personal) is a fool; because if there is a world, there will have to be a cause, and that is what is called God. You cannot have an effect without knowing that there is a cause. God will only vanish when this world vanishes; then, you will become God (absolute) and this world will be no longer for you. So long as the dream, that you are a body, exists, you are bound to see yourself as being born and dying; but as soon as that dream vanishes, so will the dream vanish, that you are being born and dying, and so will the other dream, that there is a universe, vanish. That very thing which we now see as the

universe, will appear to us as God (absolute) and that very God who has so long been external, will appear to be internal, as our own Self.

THE

SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

(A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF SANKHYA, VEDANTA AND OTHER SYSTEMS OF THOUGHT)



BY

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

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EDITOR'S PREFACE.

"When any Science reaches a unity, it cannot possibly go any farther. You cannot go beyond this idea of the Absolute, the idea of the One, out of which everything in the universe has evolved. * * The last word of Advaita is *Tattvamasi*,—That thou art." These are the words of the author of the present volume, at the end of the book. It is a clear and concise statement of the daring claim made by the Sages of India, from very old times, that they have attained to such Unity in the religious field and succeeded in bringing Religion to the rank of a perfect and complete Science. The methods adopted by them to come to this result, were the same as followed by all the Sciences of the present day, *viz.*, observation and analysis of the facts of our experience, and a synthetical combination of the results

obtained, to find out the same facts. That Kapila, Vyasa, Patanjali and indeed all the philosophers of India, including most of the Vedic Seers, applied these methods in coming to their respective discoveries—has been fully discussed by the author in his books on the different Yogas.

Wonderful as the claim seems and improbable to the Superficial eye, the world had not had the power and inclination to shift the grounds on which it was advanced. The difficulties of an obsolete language, expression and imagery, the two concise character of the aphorisms (Sutras) and the leaden dross of time always overwhelmed or led astray the stray stragglers, who made any attempt along the line while the Indian national mind was sleeping through centuries, perfectly exhausted with the super-human exertions of the great discovery ! No wonder it needed the present period of

reawakening of 'the mother-land of Dharma' and along with it the Super-human vision of Bhagawan Sri Rama-krishna and the gifted talent of Swami Vivekananda to do the work as well as to teach humanity the way to apply the great truth to its daily life, in India and abroad—for an Indian mind is always needed to interpret things purely Indian. To understand fully the greatness of the Swami, however, we must always bear in mind the fact that these were a Series of seven lectures, delivered without notes, before a little class in New York, in the beginning of 1896! It is fortunate indeed, that they were taken down at the time by shorthand, making it possible for us to get them printed in this present form, after the expiration of such a long time and the editor is thankful for being requested to do his work while he was in America, at the beginning of 1897.

Editor's Preface.

Nothing of any importance has been changed in the body of the lectures themselves excepting the substitution of the word *Prakriti* for Nature. In the editor's humble opinion there is no English equivalent for the Sanskrit word and Nature can never be one. For the idea connoted by it is the finished result of what is connoted by the word *Prakriti*. *Prakriti* therefore can never mean Nature but the primal elements and forces, which form the materials for the creation of the universe. *Prakriti* is the cause, of which Nature is the effect or out of which Nature is being produced. "Primal matter and energy held in equilibrium" or "the latent condition of primal matter and energy" expresses the idea aright. We would request the reader to keep this will stamped in his mind to understand the words of the Swami in the following pages clearly.

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INTRODUCTION

THIS universe of ours, the universe of the senses, the rational, the intellectual, is bounded on both sides by the illimitable, the unknowable, the ever unknown. Herein is the search, herein are the inquiries, here are the facts, whence comes the light which is known to the world as religion. Essentially, however, religion belongs to the supersensuous and not to the sense plane. It is beyond all reasoning and is not on the plane of intellect. It is a vision, an inspiration, a plunge into the unknown and unknowable, making the unknowable more than known, for it can never be "known." The search has been in the human mind, as I believe, from the very beginning of humanity. There cannot have been human reasoning

and intellect in any period of the world's history without this struggle, this search beyond. In our little universe, the human mind, we see a thought arise. Whence it arises we do not know, and when it disappears, where it goes we know not either. The macrocosm and the microcosm are, as it were, in the same groove, passing through the same stages, vibrating in the same key.

In these lectures I shall try to bring before you the Hindu theory that religions do not come from without, but from within. It is my belief that religious thought is in man's very constitution, so much so that it is impossible for him to give up religion until he can give up his mind and body, until he can give up thought and life. As long as a man thinks, this struggle must go on, and so long man must have some form of religion. Thus we see various forms of religion in the world.

It is a bewildering study, but it is not, as many of us think, a vain speculation. Amidst this chaos there is harmony, throughout these discordant sounds there is a note of concord, and he who is prepared to listen to it will catch the tone.

The great question of all questions at the present time is this : Taking for granted that the known and the knowable are bounded on both sides by the unknowable and the infinitely unknown, why struggle for that infinite unknown ? Why shall we not be content with the known ? Why shall we not rest satisfied with eating, drinking, and doing a little good to society ? This idea is in the air. From the most learned professor to the prattling baby, we are told to do good to the world, that is all of religion, and that it is useless to trouble ourselves about questions of the beyond. So much is this the case that it has become a truism. But fortunately we *must* ques-

tion the beyond. The present, the expressed, is only one part of that unexpressed. The sense universe is, as it were, only one portion, one bit of that infinite spiritual universe projected into the plane of sense consciousness. How can this little bit of projection be explained, be understood, without knowing that which is beyond? It is said of Socrates that one day while lecturing at Athens, he met a Brahmin who had travelled into Greece, and Socrates told the Brahmin that the greatest study for mankind is man. The Brahmin sharply retorted: "How can you know man until you know God?" This God, this eternally unknowable, or absolute, or infinite, or without name,—you may call Him by what name you like,—is the rational, the only explanation, the *raison d etre* of that which is known and knowable, this present life. Take anything before you, the most material thing; take one of the most material

sciences, as chemistry or physics, astronomy or biology, study it, push the study forward and forward, and the gross forms will begin to melt and become finer and finer, until they come to a point where you are bound to make a tremendous leap from these material things into the immaterial. The gross melts into the fine, physics into metaphysics, in every department of knowledge.

Thus man finds himself driven to a study of the beyond. Life will be a desert, human life will be vain if we cannot know the beyond. It is very well to say: Be contented with the things of the present; the cows and the dogs are, and all animals, and that is what makes them animals. So if man rests content with the present and gives up all search into the beyond, mankind will have to go back to the animal plane again. It is religion, the inquiry into the beyond, that makes the difference between man and an animal. Well has it

been said that man is the only animal that naturally looks upwards ; every other animal naturally looks prone. That looking upward and going upward and seeking perfection are what is called salvation, and the sooner a man begins to go higher, the sooner he raises himself towards this idea of truth as salvation. It does not consist in the amount of money in your pocket, or the dress you wear, or the house you live in, but in the wealth of spiritual thought in your brain. That is what makes for human progress, that is the source of all material and intellectual progress, the motive power behind, the enthusiasm that pushes mankind forward.

Religion does not live in bread, does not dwell in a house. Again and again you hear this objection advanced, "What good can religion do? Can it take away the provety of the poor?" Supposing it cannot, would that prove the untruth of religion?

Suppose a baby stands up among you when you are trying to demonstrate an astronomical theorem, and says: "Does it bring gingerbread?" "No, it does not," you answer. "Then," says the baby, "it is useless." Babies judge the whole universe from their own standpoint, that of producing gingerbread, and so are the babies of the world. We must not judge of higher things from a low standpoint. Everything must be judged by its own standard and the infinite must be judged by an infinite standard. Religion permeates the whole of man's life, not only the present, but the past, present, and future. It is therefore the eternal relation between the eternal soul and the eternal God. Is it logical to measure its value by its action upon five minutes of human life? Certainly not. These are all negative arguments.

Now comes the question: Can religion really accomplish anything? It can. It

brings to man eternal life. It has made man what he is and will make of this human animal a god. That is what religion can do. Take religion from human society and what will remain? Nothing but a forest of brutes. Sense-happiness is not the goal of humanity; wisdom (Jnânam) is the goal of all life. We find that man enjoys his intellect more than an animal enjoys its senses, and we see that man enjoys his spiritual nature even more than his rational nature. So the highest wisdom must be this spiritual knowledge. With this knowledge will come bliss. All these things of this world are but the shadows, the manifestations in the third or fourth degree of the real Knowledge and Bliss.

One question more: What is the goal? Nowadays it is asserted that man is infinitely progressing, forward and forward, and there is no goal of perfection to attain to.

Ever approaching, never attaining, whatever that may mean and however wonderful it may be, it is absurd on the face of it. Is there any motion in a straight line? A straight line infinitely projected becomes a circle, it returns to the starting point. You must end where you begin, and as you began in God, you must go back to God. What remains? Detail work. Through eternity you have to do the detail work.

Yet anther question. Are we to discover new truths of religion as we go on? Yea and nay. In the first place we cannot know anything more of religion, it has all been known. In all the religions of the world you will find it claimed that there is a unity within us. Being one with divinity, there cannot be any further progress in that sense. Knowledge means finding this unity. I see you as men and women, and this is variety. It becomes scientific knowledge when I group you together and call you

human beings. Take the science of chemistry, for instance. Chemists are seeking to resolve all known substances into their original elements and if possible to find the one element from which all these were derived. The time may come when they will find one element that is the source of all other elements. Reaching that, they can go no farther ; the science of chemistry will have become perfect. So it is with the science of religion. If we can discover this perfect unity, there cannot be any farther progress.

The next question is : Can such a unity be found ? In India the attempt has been made from the earliest times to reach a science of religion and philosophy, for the Hindus do not separate these as is customary in Western countries. We regard religion and philosophy as but two aspects of one thing which must equally be grounded in reason and scientific truth. In the

lectures that are to follow I shall try to explain to you first the system of the *Sânkhya* philosophy, one of the most ancient in India, or in fact in the world. Its great exponent Kapila is the father of all Hindu psychology and the ancient system that he taught is still the foundation of all accepted systems of philosophy in India to-day,—which are known as the *Dârsanas*. They all adopt his psychology, however widely they differ in other respects.

Next I shall endeavour to show you how Vedânta, as the logical outcome of the *Sânkhya*, pushes its conclusions yet farther. While its cosmology agrees with that taught by Kapila, the Vedânta is not satisfied to end in dualism, but continues its search for the final unity which is alike the goal of science and religion. To make clear the manner in which the task is accomplished will be the effort of the later lectures in this course.

I

THE SÂNKHYA COSMOLOGY

HERE are two words, the microcosm and the macrocosm, the internal and the external. We get truths from both of these by means of experience ; there is internal experience and external experience. The truths gathered from internal experience are psychology, metaphysics and religion ; from external experience the physical sciences. Now a perfect truth should be in harmony with experience in both these worlds. The microcosm must bear testimony to the macrocosm, and the macrocosm to the microcosm ; physical truth must have its counterpart in the internal world, and the internal world must have its verification in the outside. Yet as a rule we find that many of these truths are constantly conflicting. At one period of the world's history the

"internals" became supreme, and they began to fight the "externals"; at the present time the "externals", the physicists, have become supreme, and they have put down many claims of the psychologists and metaphysicians. So far as my little knowledge goes, I find that the really essential parts of psychology are in perfect accordance with the essential parts of modern physical knowledge.

It is not given to every individual to be great in every respect; it is not given to the same race, or nation, to be equally strong in the research of all the fields of knowledge. The modern European nations are very strong in their researches into external physical knowledge, but the ancient Europeans were weak in their researches into the internal part of man. On the other hand, the Orientals have not been very strong in their researches in the external physical world, but have excelled in their researches into the internal, and therefore

we find that some of the Oriental theories are not in accordance with Occidental physics, neither is Occidental psychology in harmony with Oriental teachings on this subject. The Oriental physicists have been criticised by Occidental scientists. At the same time each rests on truth, and, as we stated before, real truth in any field of knowledge will not contradict itself, the truths internal are in harmony with the truths external.

We know the present theories of the Cosmos according to the modern astronomers and physicists, and at the same time we know how wofully they hurt the old school of theologians, and how every new scientific discovery that is made is as a bomb thrown into their house, and how they have attempted in every age to put down all these researches. In the first place, let us go over the psychological and scientific ideas of the Orientals as to cosmology and all that pertains to it, and you will

find how wonderfully it is in accordance with all the latest discoveries of modern science, and when there is anything lacking you will find that it is on the side of modern science. We all use the word Nature, and the old Hindu philosophers called it by two different names, *Prakriti*, which is almost the same as the English word "nature", and by the more scientific name, *Avyaktam* ("undifferentiated"), from which everything proceeds, out of which come atoms and molecules, matter and force, and mind and intellect. It is startling to find that the philosophers and metaphysicians of India ages ago stated that mind is but matter in a finer form, for what are our present materialists striving to do but to show that mind is as much a product of nature as the body ? And so is thought ; and we shall find by and by that the intellect also comes from the same nature which is called *avyaktam*, the undifferentiated.

The ancient teachers define *avayaktam* as the "equilibrium of the three forces," one of which is called *Sattva*, the second *Rajas* and the third *Tamas*. *Tamas*, the lowest force, is that of attraction, a little higher is *Rajas*, that of repulsion, and the highest is the control of these two, *Sattva* : so that when the two forces, attraction and repulsion, are held in perfect control, or balance, by the *Sattva*, there is no creation, no modification ; but as soon as this equilibrium is lost, the balance is disturbed and one of these forces gets stronger than the other. Then change and motion begin and evolution of all this goes on. This state of things is going on cyclically, periodically ; that is to say, there is a period of disturbance of the balance, when all these forces begin to combine and recombine, and this universe is projected ; and there is also a period when everything has a tendency to revert to the primal state of equilibrium, and the time comes when a

total absence of all manifestation is reached. Again, after a period, this state is disturbed, the forces tend to project outward and the universe slowly comes out in the form of waves ; for all motion in this universe is in the form of waves, in successive rises and falls.

Some of the old philosophers taught that the whole universe quiets down for a period ; others maintained that this quieting down applies only to systems. That is to say, that while our system here, this solar system, will quiet down and go back into that undifferentiated state, there will be millions of other systems going the other way. I should rather follow the second opinion, that this quieting down is not simultaneous over the whole universe, but that in different parts different things are going on. But the principle remains the same, that all that we see, that *Prakriti* herself is progressing in successive rises and falls. The stage of

going back to the balance, to the perfect equilibrium, is called the end of a cycle. The whole *Kalpa*, the evolution and the involution, has been compared by theistic writers in India to the outbreathing and in-breathing of God ; God, as it were, breathes out the universe, and it returns into Him again. When it quiets down, what becomes of the universe? It still exists, only in finer form, as it is called in Sanskrit, in the "causal state" *(Kârana)*. Causation, time and space are still there, only they are potential. This return to an undifferentiated condition constitutes involution. Involution and evolution are eternally going on, so that when we speak of a beginning, we refer only to the beginning of a cycle.

The most extraneous part of the universe is what in modern times we call gross matter. The ancient Hindus called it the *Bhutas*, the external elements. One of these according to them is the cause of the

rest for every other element is produced out of this one, and this element has been called *Âkâsa*. This is somewhat similar to the modern idea of ether, though not exactly the same. *Âkâsa* is the primal element out of which every gross thing proceeds, and along with it there is something else called *Prâna*: we shall see what it is as we go on. The *prâna* and the *âkâsa* exist as long as creation lasts. They combine and recombine and form all gross manifestations until at the end of the cycle all these subside and go back to the unmanifested form of *âkâsa* and *prâna*. There is in the Rig Veda, the oldest scriptures in existence, a beautiful passage describing creation, which is most poetical—"When there was neither ought nor nought, when darkness was rolling over darkness, what existed ?" and the answer is given, "It (the Eternal One) then existed without motion."* *Prâna*

* Rig Veda—Mandal 10th, 129 Shukta.

and *âkâsa* were latent in that Eternal One, but there was no phenomenal manifestation. This state is called *Avyaktam*, which literally means "without vibration," or unmanifested. At the beginning of a new cycle of evolution, this *avyaktam* begins to vibrate and blow after blow is given by *prâna* to the *âkâsa* causing condensation and gradually, through the forces of attraction and repulsion, atoms are formed. These in turn condense into molecules and finally into the different gross elements of which every object in nature is composed.

We generally find these things very curiously translated ; people do not go to the ancient philosophers or to their commentators for their translation and have not learning enough to understand for themselves. They translate the elements as "air," "fire," and so on. If they would go to the commentators they would find that they do not mean anything of the sort. The *âkâsa*, by the

repeated blows of *prâna*, produces *vâyu* or the vibratory state of the *âkâsa*, which in turn produces gaseous matter. The vibrations growing more and more rapid generate heat, which in Sanskrit is called *tejas*. Gradually it is cooled off and the gaseous substance becomes liquid, *Âpa*, and finally solid, *prithivi*. We have first *âkâsa* vibrating, then comes heat, then it becomes liquified, and when still more condensed it appears as solid matter. It goes back to the unmanifested condition in exactly the reverse way. The solids will be converted into liquid and the liquid into a mass of heat, that will slowly go back into the gaseous state, then disintegradation of atoms will begin and finally the equilibrium of all forces will be reached, when vibration will stop and thus the cycle of evolution which in Sanskrit is called *Kalpa* will be at an end. We know from modern astronomy that this earth and sun of ours are under-

going the same transitions, this solid earth will melt down and become liquid once more, and will eventually go back to the gaseous state.

Prâna cannot work alone without the help of *âkâsa.* All that we know of it is motion or vibration. Every movement that we see is a modification of this *prâna*, and everything that we know in the form of matter, either as form or as resistance, is a modification of this *âkâsa.* The *prâna* cannot exist alone, or act without a medium, and in every state of it, whether as pure *prâna*, or when it changes into other forces of nature, as gravitation or centrifugal attraction, it can never be separate from *âkâsa.* You have never seen force without matter or matter without force; what we call force and matter being simply the gross manifestations of the two and these when superfine, the old philosophers have called *prâna* and *âkâsâ*. *Prâna* you can call in

English, life, or vital energy, but you must not restrict it to the life of man, nor should you identify it with the spirit, *Âtman*. Thus creation is a product of *prâna* and *âkâsa* and is without beginning and end; it cannot have either, for it is eternally going on.

The next question that comes is rather a fine one. Some European philosophers have asserted that this world exists because "I" exist, and if "I" do not exist, the world will not exist. Sometimes it is expressed thus—if all the people in the world were to die, and there were no more human beings, and no animals with powers of perception and intelligence, all manifestations would disappear. It seems paradoxical, but gradually we shall see clearly that this can be proved. But these European philosophers do not know the psychology of it, although they know the principle; they have only a glimpse of it.

First we shall consider another proposition of these old psychologists which is rather startling, that the grossest elements are the *bhutas*, but that all gross things are the results of fine ones. Everything that is gross is composed of a combination of fine things, so the *bhutas* must be composed of certain fine particles, called in Sanskrit the *tanmâtras*. I smell a flower; in doing so, something must have come in contact with my nose. The flower is there, I do not see it move towards me; but without something coming in contact with my nose how can I have the smell? That which comes from the flower and into contact with my nose are the *tanmâtras*, fine molecules of that flower, so fine that no diminution will be perceived in the flower even if we all smell it the whole day. So with heat, light, sight, and everything. These *tanmâtras* can again be subdivided into atoms. Different philosophers have differ-

ent theories about the dimensions of atoms but we know these are only theories, so we leave them out of discussion. Sufficient for us that everything gross is composed of things that are very, very minute. We first get the gross elements, which we feel externally, and composing them are the fine elements, which our organs touch, which come in contact with the nerves of the nose, eyes and ears. The ethereal wave which touches my eyes, I cannot see, yet I know it must come in contact with my optic nerve before I can see the light. So with hearing, we can never see the particles that come in contact with our ears, but we know that they must be there. What is the cause of these *tanmâtras?* A very startling and curious answer is given by our psychologists,—self-consciousness. That is the cause of these fine materials, and the cause of the organs. What are these organs? Here is the eye, but the eye does not see. If the

eyes did see, when a man is dead, and his eyes are still perfect, they would still be able to see. There is some change somewhere ; something has gone out of the man, and that something, which really sees and of which the eye is but the instrument, is called the organ. So this nose is an instrument, and there is an organ corresponding to it. Modern physiology can tell you what that is, a nerve centre in the brain. The eyes, ears, etc., are simply the external instruments. Thus the organs, *Indriyas*, as they are called in Sanskrit, are the real seats of perception.

What is the use of having one organ for the nose, and one for the eyes, and so on ? Why will not one serve the purpose ? To make it clear to you,—I am talking, and you are listening, and you do not see what is going on around you because the mind has attached itself to the organ of hearing, and has detached itself from

the sight-organ. If there were only one organ, the mind would see and hear and smell at the same time, and it would be impossible for it not to do all three at the same time. Therefore it is necessary that there should be separate organs for all these centres. This has been borne out by modern physiology. It is certainly possible for us to see and hear at the same time, but that is because the mind attaches itself partially to both centres, which are the organs. What are the instruments? We see that these are external and made of the gross materials. Here they are,—eyes, nose, and ears, etc. Of what are the organs made? They are made of finer materials and are internal things because they are the centres. Just as this body is composed of gross material for transforming *prâna* into different gross forces, so these finer organs behind, are composed of finer materials, for the manufacture of *prâna* into the finer

forces of perception. All these organs or *indriyas* combined, plus the internal instrument or *antahkarana*, are called the finer body of man,—the *linga* (or *sûkshma*) *sarira*.

It has a real form, because everything material must have a form. Behind the *indriyas* is the *manas*, the *chitta* in *vritti*, what might be called the vibratory or the unsettled state of the mind. If you throw a stone into a calm lake, first there will be vibration, and then resistance. For a moment the water will vibrate and then it will react on the stone. So, when any impression comes on the *chitta*, or "mind stuff," it vibrates a little. This state of the mind is called the *manas*. Then comes the reaction, the will.* There is another thing behind this will which accompanies all the acts of the mind, which is

* Sanskrit—*Buddhi*, the determining or decisive faculty of the mind.

called egoism, the *ahamkâra*, the self-consciousness, which says "I am," and behind that is what is called *Mahat*,* the intelligence, the highest form of nature's existence. Behind the intellect is the true Self of man, the *Purusha*, the pure, the perfect, who is alone the seer, and for whom is all this change. The *Purusha* is looking on at all these changes. He himself is never impure; but by implication, by what the Vedantists call *adhyâsam*, or reflection, he appears to be so—as when a red flower is held before a piece of crystal, the crystal will look red or a blue flower and the crystal will look blue and yet the crystal itself is colorless. There are many *Purushas* or Selves; each pure and perfect, and it is all these various divisions of gross matter and fine matter that are imposing on Them and making Them appear variously colored. Why is *Prakriti* doing all this? *Prakriti* is

* Literally means great. Sometimes called *Buddhi*.

undergoing all these changes for the enjoyment and the benefit of the Self, so that it will realise its free nature. This immense book which we call the universe is stretched before man so that he may read, and come out, as an omniscient and omnipotent being. I must here tell you that some of our best psychologists do not believe in a personal God in the sense in which you believe in Him. The father of all psychologists, Kapila, denies the existence of God as Creator. His idea is that a personal God is quite unnecessary; *Prakriti* is sufficient to work out all that is good. He repudiated the so-called "Design" theory of the universe. A more childish theory has never been advanced. But he admits a peculiar kind of God. He says we are all struggling to get free, and when man becomes free he can, as it were, melt away into *Prakriti* for the time being, to come out at the beginning of the next cycle an omniscient and om-

nipotent being and be its ruler. In that sense he can be called God. Thus you and I and the humblest beings will be gods in different cycles. Kapila says there can be such a temporal God, but an eternal God, eternally omnipotent and eternally ruler of the universe, there can never be. If there were such a God, there would be this difficulty—he must either be bound or free. A God who is perfectly free would not create; there would be no necessity. If he were bound, he would not create because he could not, he would be weak himself. So, in either case, there cannot be an omnipotent or omniscient eternal ruler. So wherever the word God is mentioned in our Scriptures, the Vedas, Kapila says it means those perfected souls who have become free. The *Sânkhya* system does not believe in the unity of all souls. Vedânta believes that all individual souls are united in one cosmic Being called

Brahman, but Kapila, the founder of the *Sânkhya*, was dualistic. His analysis of the universe so far as it goes is really marvellous. He was the father of Hindu evolutionists, and all the later philosophical systems are simply outcomes of his thought.

According to this system all souls will regain their freedom and their natural rights, which are omnipotence and omniscience. Here the question may be asked, whence is this bondage of the souls? The *Sânkhya* says it is without beginning: but if it be without beginning it must also be without end and we shall never be free. Kapila explains that this "without beginning" means not in a constant line. *Prakriti* is without beginning and without end, but not in the same sense as is the soul or *Purusha* because *Prakriti* has no individuality, just as a river flowing by us is every moment getting a fresh body of water, and the sum total of all these bodies of water is the

how it can be proved. I do not know this table as it is, but it makes an impression; it comes to the eyes, then to the *indriyas*, and then to the mind; the mind then reacts, and that reaction is what I call the table. It is just the same as throwing a stone into a lake; the lake throws a wave against the stone; this wave is what we know. The waves coming out are all we know. In the same way the fashion of this wall is in my mind; what is external nobody knows; when I want to know it, it has to become that material which I furnish; I, with my own mind, have furnished the material for my eyes, and the something which is outside is only the occasion, the suggestion, and upon that suggestion I project my mind, and it takes the form of what I see. The question is, how do we all see the same things? Because we all have a part of this cosmic mind. Those who have mind will see the

thing, and those who have not will not see it. This goes to show that since this universe has existed there has never been a want of mind, of that one cosmic mind. Every human being, every animal, is also furnished out of that cosmic mind, because it is always present and furnishing material for their formation.

II

PRAKRITI AND PURUSHA

We will take up the categories we have been discussing and come to the particulars. If we remember we started with *Prakriti*. This has been called by the *Sânkhya* philosophers indiscrete or inseparate, and defined as perfect balance of the materials in it; and it naturally follows that in perfect balance there cannot be any motion. All that we see, feel, and hear is simply a compound of motion and matter. In the primal state, before this manifestation, where there was no motion, perfect balance, this *Prakriti* was indestructible, because decomposition comes only with limitation. Again, according to the *Sânkhya*, atoms are not the primal state. This universe does not come out of atoms, they may be the secondary, or tertiary state. The

original matter may compound into atoms, which in turn compound into greater and greater things, and as far as modern investigations go, they rather point towards that. For instance, in the modern theory of ether, if you say ether is also atomic, that will not solve the proposition at all. To make it clearer, say that air is composed of atoms ; and we know that ether is everywhere, interpenetrating, omnipresent, and that atoms are floating, as it were, in ether. If ether again be composed of atoms, there will still be some space between two atoms of ether. What fills up that ? And again there will be another space between the atoms of that which fills up this space. If you propose that there is another ether still finer you must still have something to fill that space, and so it will be *regressus in infinitum*, what the *Sânkhya* philosophers call *anavasthâ*,–never reaching a final conclusion. So the atomic theory

cannot be final. According to the *Sânkhyas* this *Prakriti* is omnipresent, one omnipresent mass of matter in which are the causes of everything that exists. What is meant by cause? Cause is the more subtle state of the manifested state, the unmanifested state of that which becomes manifested. What do you mean by destruction? It is reverting to the cause,—the materials out of which a body is composed go back into their original state. Beyond this idea of destruction, any idea such as annihilation, is on the face of it absurd. According to modern physical sciences, it can be demonstrated that all destruction means that which Kapila called ages ago "reverting to the causal state." Going back to the finer form is all that is meant by destruction. You know how it can be demonstrated in a laboratory that matter is indestructible. Those of you who have studied chemistry

will know that if you place a candle and a caustic pencil inside a glass tube and let the candle burn away, then take the caustic pencil out of the tube and weigh it, you will find that the pencil will weigh exactly its previous weight, plus the weight of the candle,—the candle became finer and finer, and went on to the caustic. So that in this present stage of our knowledge, if any man claims that anything becomes annihilated, he is only making himself absurd. It is only uneducated people who would advance such a proposition, and it is curious that modern knowledge coincides with what those old philosophers taught. The ancients proceeded in their inquiry by taking up mind as the basis ; they analyzed the mental part of this universe and came to certain conclusions, while modern science is analyzing the physical part, and it also has come to the same conclusions. Both analyses have led to the same truth.

You must remember that the first manifestation of this *Prakriti* in the cosmos is what the *Sânkhyas* called *Mahat*. We may call it universal intelligence—the great principle; that is the literal meaning. The first manifestation of *Prakriti* is this intelligence; I would not translate it by self-consciousness, because that would be wrong. Consciousness is only a part of this intelligence, which is universal. It covers all the grounds of consciousness, sub-consciousness and super-consciousness. In nature, for instance, certain changes are going on before your eyes which you see and understand, but there are other changes so much finer that no human perception can catch them. They are from the same cause, the same *Mahat* is making these changes. There are other changes, beyond the reach of our mind or reasoning, all these series of changes are in this *Mahat*. You will understand it better when I come to the

individual. Out of this *Mahat* comes the universal egoism, and these are both material. There is no difference between matter and mind save in degree. It is the same substance in finer or grosser form; one changes into the other, and this will exactly coincide with the modern physiological research, and will save you from a great deal of fighting and struggling if you believe it than that you have a mind separate from the brain, and all such impossible things. This substance called *Mahat* changes into the material called egoism, the fine state of matter, and that egoism changes into two varieties. In one variety it changes into the organs. Organs are of two kinds—organs of sensation and organs of reaction.* They are not the eyes or nose, but something finer; what you call brain centres, and nerve

* Organs of sensation—The nerve centres by which we see, hear, smell, taste and touch. Organs of reaction—The nerve centres regulating hands, feet, voice, excretion and procreation.

centres. This egoism becomes changed, and out of this material are manufactured these centres and these nerves. Out of the same substance, the egoism, is manufactured another fine form, the *tanmâtras*, fine particles of matter, those for instance which strike your nose and cause you to smell. You cannot perceive these fine particles, you can only know that they are there. The *tanmâtras* are manufactured out of the egoism, and out of the *tanmâtras*, or subtle matter, is manufactured the gross matter, air, water, earth, and all the things that we see and feel. I want to impress this on your mind. It is very hard to grasp it, because, in Western countries, the ideas are so queer about mind and matter. It is hard to take these impressions out of our brains. I myself had tremendous difficulty, being educated in Western philosophy in my childhood.

These are all cosmic things. Think of

this universal extension of matter, unbroken, one substance, undifferentiated, which is the first state of everything, and which begins to change just as milk becomes curd, and that it is changed into another substance called *Mahat*, which in one state manifests as intelligence and in another state as egoism. It is the same substance, only changed into the grosser matter called egoism. Thus is the whole universe itself built, as it were, layer after layer; first undifferentiated *Prakriti* (*Avyaktam*), and that changes into universal intelligence (*Mahat*), and that again is changed into universal egoism (*Ahamkâra*), and that changes into universal sensible matter. That matter changes into universal sense-organs, again changes into universal fine particles, and these in turn combine and become this gross universe. This is the cosmic plan, according to the *Sânkhyas*, and what is in the cosmos or

macrocosm, must be in the individual or microcosm.

Take an individual man. He has first a part of undifferentiated nature in him, and that material nature in him becomes changed into *mahat*, a small particle of the universal intelligence, and that small particle of the universal intelligence in him becomes changed into egoism—a particle of the universal egoism. This egoism in turn becomes changed into the sense-organs, and the *tanmâtras*, and out of the latter combining he manufactures his world, his body. I want this to be clear, because it is the first stepping stone to Vedânta, and it is absolutely necessary for you to know, because this is the basis of the different systems of philosophy of the whole world. There is no philosophy in the world that is not indebted to Kapila, the founder of this *Sânkhya* system. Pythagoras came to India and studied this

philosophy and carried some of these ideas to the Greeks. Later it formed the Alexandrian school, and still later formed the basis of Gnostic philosophy. Thus it became divided into two parts; one went to Europe and Alexandria, and the other remained in India, and became the basis of all Hindu philosophy, for out of it the system of Vyâsa was developed. This was the first rational system that the world saw, this system of Kapila. Every metaphysician in the world must pay homage to him. I want to impress on your mind that as the great father of philosophy, we are bound to listen to him, and respect what he said. This wonderful man, most ancient of philosophers, is mentioned even in the Vedas. How wonderful his perceptions were! If there is any proof required of the power of the Yogis to perceive things beyond the range of the ordinary senses, such men are the proofs. How could

they perceive them ? They had no microscopes, or telescopes. How fine their perception was, how perfect their analysis and how wonderful !

To revert again to the microcosm, man. As we have seen, he is built on exactly the same plan. First the nature is "indiscrete" or perfectly balanced, then it becomes disturbed, and action sets in and the first change produced by that action is what is called *mahat*,—intelligence. Now you see this intelligence in man is just a particle of the cosmic intelligence,—the *Mahat*. Out of it comes self-consciousness, and from this the sensory and the motor nerves, and the finer particles out of which the gross body is manufactured. I will here remark that there is one difference between Schopenhauer and Vedânta. Schopenhauer says that desire, or will, is the cause of everything. It is the will to exist that makes us manifest, but the Advaitists deny

this. They say it is the intelligence. There cannot be a single particle of will which is not a reaction. So many things are beyond will. It is only a manufactured something out of the ego, and the ego is a a product of something still higher, the intelligence, and that is a modification of "indiscrete" Nature, or *Prakriti*.

It is very important to understand this *mahat* in man,—the intelligence. This intelligence itself is modified into what we call egoism, and this intelligence is the cause of all these changes which result in producing the body. This covers all the grounds of sub-consciousness, consciousness and super-consciousness. What are these three states ? The sub-conscious state is what we find in animals, and call instinct. This is nearly infallible, but very limited. Instinct almost never fails. An animal instinctively knows a poisonous herb from an edible one, but its instinct is limited to

one or two things; it works like a machine. Then comes the higher state of knowlege, which is fallible, makes mistakes often, but has a larger scope, although it is slow, and this you call reason. It is much larger than instinct, but there are more dangers of mistake in reasoning than in instinct. There is a still higher state of the mind, the super-conscious, which belongs only to the Yogis, men who have cultivated it. This is as infallible as instinct, and still more unlimited than reason. It is the highest state. We must remember that as in man this *mahat* is the real cause of all that which is manifesting itself in various ways, covering the whole ground of his sub-conscious, conscious and super-conscious states—the three states in which knowledge exists—so in the Cosmos, this universal Intelligence, *Mahat*, exists as instinct, as reason, and as super-reason.

Now comes a delicate question, which is

always being asked. If a perfect God created the universe, why is there imperfection in it? What we call the universe is what we see, and that is only this little plane of consciousness or reason, and beyond that we do not see at all. Now the very question is an impossible one. If I take up only a bit out of a mass and look at it, it seems to be imperfect. Naturally. The universe seems imperfect because we make it so. How? What is reason? What is knowledge? Knowledge is finding associations. You go into the street and see a man, and know it is a man. You have seen many men, and each one has made an impression on your mind, and when you now see this man, you calmly refer to your store of impressions, see many pictures of men there, and you put this new one with the rest, pigeon-hole it and are satisfied. When a new impression comes and it has associations in your mind, you are satisfied,

and this state of association is called knowledge. Knowledge is, therefore, pigeon-holing one experience with the already existing fund of experience, and this is one of the great proofs that you cannot have any knowledge until you have already a fund in existence. If you are without experience, or if, as some European philosophers think, the mind is a *tabula rasa*, it cannot get any knowledge, because the very fact of knowledge is the recognition of the new by comparison with already existing impressions. There must be a store ready to which to refer a new impression. Suppose a child is born into this world without such a fund, it would be impossible for him to get any knowledge. Therefore the child must have been in a state in which he had a fund, and so knowledge is eternally going on. Show me any way of getting out of this. It is mathematical experience. This is very

much like the Spencerian and some other western philosophies. They have seen so far that there cannot be any knowledge without a fund of past knowledge and that therefore the child is born with knowledge. They have found out the truth that the cause enters into the effect, that it comes in a subtle form in order to be developed. But these philosophers say that these impressions with which the child comes, are not from the child's own past, but were in his forefathers' and have come to the child by hereditary transmission. Very soon they are going to find this theory untenable, and some of them are even now giving hard blows to the idea of heredity. Heredity is very good, but incomplete. It only explains the physical side. How would you explain the influence of environment in accordance with it? Many causes produce an effect and environment is one of them. On the other hand the Hindu

philosophers say that we make our own environment, because as our past was, so we find our present. In other words, we are what we are here and now, because of what we were in the past.

You understand now what is meant by knowledge. Knowledge is pigeon-holing a new impression with old impressions—recognizing a new impression. What is meant by recognition ? Finding its association with similar impressions that we already have. Nothing further is meant by knowledge. If that be the case, it must be that we have to see the whole series of similars in the process. Is it not ? Suppose you are to know a pebble ; to find its association, you will have to see the whole series of pebbles similar to it. But with the universe we cannot do that, because in our reasoning we see only one perception of it and can neither see on this side nor on that side of it and refer it to its associ-

ation. Therefore the universe seems unintelligible, because knowledge and reason are always finding associations. This bit of the universe cut off by our consciousness is a startling new thing, and we are not able to find its associations. Therefore we are struggling with it, and we think it is so horrible, so wicked, and bad—sometimes we think it is good, but generally imperfect. The universe will be known only when we find its associations. We shall recognize them when we go beyond the universe and our little self-consciousness, and then alone the universe will stand explained. Until we do that all our fruitless striving will never explain it—because knowledge is the finding of similars, and this conscious plane gives us only a partial view of the universe. So with our idea of the universal *Mahat*, or what in our ordinary everyday language we call God. All that we have of the idea of God

is only one perception, a partial view of Him and all the rest is cut off and covered by our human limitation. "I, the Universal, so great am I that even this universe is a part of me." * That is why we see God as imperfect, and we can never understand Him, because it is impossible. The only way to understand Him is to go beyond reason, beyond self-consciousness. "When thou goest beyond the heard and hearing, the thought and thinking, then alone wilt thou come to Truth." † "Go thou beyond the Scriptures, because they teach only up to *Prakriti*, up to the three qualities of which It is composed and out of which evolves the universe." ‡ When we go beyond them we find the harmony, not before.

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* Bhagavad Gita X 42.

† Bhagavad Gita II. 52.

‡ Gita II. 45.

So far it is clear that this macrocosm and microcosm are built on exactly the same plan, and of this microcosm we know only one very small part. We know neither the sub-conscious, nor the super-conscious. We know only the conscious. If a man says "I am a sinner," he is foolish, because he does not know himself. He is the most ignorant of men about himself; one part of himself only he knows, because the fact of knowledge covers only one part of the "mind-ground" he is in. So with this universe; it is possible to know only one part through reasoning, but *Prakriti* comprises the whole of it, the sub-conscious, the conscious and the super-conscious, the individual *mahat* and the universal *Mahat* with all their subsequent modifications, and these lie beyond reason.

What makes *Prakriti* change? We have seen up to this point that everything in nature, *Prakriti* itself, is *jadâ* (insentient).

It is working under law ; it is all compound and insentient. Mind, intelligence, and will, all are insentient. But they are all reflecting the sentiency, the *Chit* (Intelligence) of some Being who is beyond all this, and whom the Sânkhya philosophers call *Purusha*. This *Purusha* is the unwitting cause of all these changes in *Prakriti*—in the universe. That is to say, this *Purusha*, taking Him in the universal sense, is the God of the universe. It is claimed that the will of the Lord created the universe. This is very good as a common daily expression, but that is all. How could it be will ? Will is the third or fourth manifestation out of *Prakriti*. Many things exist before it ; and what created *them*? Will is a compound, and everything that is a compound is a production out of *Prakriti*. Will itself cannot create *Prakriti*. It is not a simple. So to say that the will of the Lord created the universe

is illogical. In man will covers a little portion only of self-consciousness. It moves our brain, some say. If it did you could stop the action of the brain, but you cannot. It is not the will. Who moves the heart ? It is not the will ; because if it were you could stop it at your will. It is neither will that is working your body, nor the universe. But it is something of which will itself is one of the manifestations. This body is being moved by a power of which will is only a manifestation in one part. So in the universe there is will, but that is only one part of the universe. The whole of the universe is not guided by will, that is why we do not find the explanation of it in will. Suppose I take it for granted that the will is moving the body, and then begin to fret and fume. It is my fault, because I had no right to take it for granted that it was will. In the same way, if I take the universe and think it is

will that moves it and then find that things do not coincide, it is my fault. This *Purusha* is not will, neither can it be intelligence, because intelligence itself is a compound. There cannot be any intelligence without some sort of matter. In man, this matter takes the form which we call brain. Wherever there is intelligence there must be matter in some form or other. Thus intelligence being a compound what then is this *Purusha ?* It is neither intelligence nor *buddhi* (will), but yet it is the cause of both these ; it is His presence that sets them all vibrating and combining. *Purusha* may be likened to some of those substances which by their mere presence promote chemical reaction, as in the case of cyanide of potassium which is added when gold is being smelted. The cyanide of potassium remains separate and unaffected, but its presence is absolutely necessary to the success of the process. So with the *Purusha.*

It does not mix with *Prakriti*; it is not Intelligence, or *Mahat*, or any one of its modifications but the Self, the Pure, the Perfect. "I am the Witness and through My witnessing, *Prakriti* is producing all that is sentient and all that is insentient."*

Whence then is this sentiency in *Prakriti*? Its basis is in the *Purusha*, and it is the very nature of the *Purusha*. It is that which cannot be expressed or understood, but which is the material of all that we call knowledge. This *Purusha* is not consciousness, because consciousness is a compound, but whatever is radient and good in this consciousness belongs to It. Sentiency is in the *Purusha*, but the *Purusha* is not intelligent, not knowing, it is the very condition in which knowledge is possible. The *Chit* in the *Purusha*, plus *Prakriti*, is what is known to us as intelligence and consciousness. All the joy and

* Gita IX. 10.

happiness and light in the universe belongs to the *Purusha*, but it is a compound because it is that *Purusha* plus *Prakriti*. "Wherever there is any happiness, wherever there is any bliss, there is one spark of that immortality, which is *Purusha*."* This *Purusha* is the great attraction of the universe ; untouched by, and unconnected with the universe, yet it attracts the whole universe. You see a man going after gold, because therein is a spark of the *Purusha*, even though he knows it not. When a man desires children, or a woman a husband, what is the attracting power ? That spark of *Purusha* behind the child and the husband. It is there, behind everything only overlaid with matter. Nothing else can attract. "In this world of insentiency that *Purusha* alone is sentient."† This is the *Purusha* of the *Sânkhyas*. As such it

* Brihadâranyaka Upanishada IV. 3—32.

† Katha Upanishada V. 13.

necessarily follows that this *Purusha* must be omnipresent for that which is not omnipresent must be limited. All limitations are caused and that which is caused must have beginning and end. If the *Purusha* is limited it will die, will not be final, will not be free, but will have been caused. Therefore if not limited, it is omnipresent. According to Kapila there are many *Purushas*, not one. An infinite number of them, you are one, I am one, each is one ; an infinite number of circles, each one infinite, running through this universe. The *Purusha* is neither born nor dies. It is neither mind nor matter, and the reflex from it is all that we know. We are sure if it be omnipresent it knows neither death nor birth. *Prakriti* is casting her shadow upon it, the shadow of birth and death, but it is by its own nature eternal. So far we have found the theory of Kapila wonderful.

Next we will have to take up the proofs

against it. So far the analysis is perfect, the psychology cannot be controverted. There is no objection to it. We asked of Kapila the question : Who created *Prakriti* ? and his answer was that *Prakriti* is uncreate. He has also said that the *Purusha* is uncreate and omnipresent and that of these *Purushas* there is an infinite number. We shall have to controvert this last proposition, and find a better solution, and by so doing we shall come to the ground taken by Vedânta. Our first doubt will be how there can be these two infinites. Then our argument will be that it is not a perfect generalization, and that therefore we have not found a perfect solution. And then we shall see how the Vedantists find their way out of all these difficulties and reach a perfect solution. Yet all the glory really belongs to Kapila. It is very easy to give a finish to a building that is nearly complete.

III

SÂNKHYA AND ADVAITA

I WILL give you first a *resumé* of the *Sânkhya* philosophy, which we have been studying, because in this lecture we want to find where its defects are, and where Vedânta comes in to supplement these deficiencies. You must remember that according to the *Sânkhya* philosophy, *Prakriti* is causing all these manifestations which we call thought, intellect and reason, love, hatred, touch and taste; that everything is from *Prakriti*. This *Prakriti* consists of three sorts of elements, one called *Sattva*, another *Rajas*, and the third *Tamas*. These are not qualities, but the materials out of which the whole universe is being evolved, and at the beginning of a cycle they remain in equilibrium. When creation comes this equilibrium is disturbed and

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these elements begin to combine and re-combine, and manifest as the universe. The first manifestation of these is what the *Sânkhya* calls the *Mahat* (universal Intelligence), and out of that comes consciousness. And out of consciousness is evolved *Manas* (universal Mind). Out of this consciousness are also evolved the organs of perception and action and the *tanmâtras*,—sound particles, touch particles, taste particles, and so forth. All fine particles are evolved from this consciousness, and out of these fine particles come the gross particles which we call matter. After the *tanmâtras* (those particles which cannot be seen, or measured) come the gross particles which we can feel and sense. The *chitta* ("mind-stuff") in its three-fold functions of intellect, consciousness and mind* is working and manufacturing the forces called *prânas*. These *prânas* have nothing to do with

* Sanskrit equivalent : *Buddhi*, *Ahamkâra* and *manas*.

breath, you must at once get rid of that idea. Breath is one effect of the Prana (universal Energy). By the *prânas* are meant the nervous forces that are governing and moving the whole body, and manifesting themselves as thought, and as the various functions of the body. The foremost and the most obvious manifestation of these *prânas* is the breathing motion. If it were caused by air, a dead man would breathe. The *prâna* acts upon the air, and not air upon it. These *prânas* are the vital forces which manipulate the whole body, and they in turn are manipulated by the mind and the *indriyas* (the two kinds of organs). So far so good. The psychology is very clear and most precise, and just think of the age of it, the oldest rational thought in the world ! Wherever there is any philosophy or rational system of thought, it owes something to Kapila. Wherever there is any attempt at psychology, there

is some indebtedness to the great father of this thought, to this man, Kapila.

So far we see that this psychology is wonderful, but we shall have to differ with it on some points, as we go on. We find that the principal idea on which Kapila works is evolution. He makes one thing evolve out of another, because his very definition of causation is "the effect is the cause reproduced in another form," * and because the whole universe, so far as we see it, is progressive and evolving. This whole universe must have evolved out of some material, out of *Prakriti*. Therefore the *Prakriti* cannot be essentially different from its cause, only when it takes form it becomes limited. The material itself is without form. But according to Kapila, from undifferentiated nature or prakriti down to the last stage of differentiation, none of these is the same as *Purusha*, the "Enjoyer,"

* Sânkhya Philosophy I. 118.

or "Enlightener." Just as a lump of clay, so is a mass of mind, and the whole universe. By itself it has no light, but we find reason and intelligence in it, therefore there must be some Existence behind it, behind the whole of *Prakriti*, whose light is percolating through it and appearing as *Mahat* and consciousness and all these various things, and this Existence is what Kapila calls the *Purusha*, or *Âtman* and the Vedantist Self. According to Kapila, the *Purusha* is a *simple* factor, not a compound. It is immaterial, the only one that is immaterial, whereas all the various manifestations are material. The *Purusha* alone knows. Suppose I see a blackboard, first the external instruments will bring that sensation to the organ (to the *indriya* according to Kapila), from the organ it will go to the mind and make an impression; the mind will cover it up with another factor,—consciousness, and will present it to the

mahat (intelligence), but *mahat* cannot act; it is the *Purusha* behind that acts. These are all its servants, bringing the sensation to It, and It gives the orders, and the *mahat* reacts. The *Purusha* is the Enjoyer, the Perceiver, the real One, the King on his throne, the Self of man, and It is immaterial. Because It is immaterial, it necessarily follows that It must be infinite, It cannot have any limitation whatever. So each one of these *purushas* is omnipresent, each is all-pervading, but can act only through fine and gross manifestations of matter. The mind, the self-consciousness, the organs and the vital forces compose what is called the fine body, or what in Christian philosophy is called the "spiritual body" of man. It is this body that comes to reward or punishment, that goes to the different heavens; that incarnates and reincarnates; because we see from the very beginning that the going and coming of

the soul (*Purusha*) is impossible. Motion means going and coming, and that which goes from one place to another cannot be omnipresent. It is this *linga-sarira* (subtle body) which comes and goes. Thus far we see from Kapila's psychology that the soul is infinite, and that the soul is the only principle that is not an evolution of *Prakriti*. It is the only one that is outside of *Prakriti* but It has apparently become bound by *Prakriti*. *Prakriti* is surrounding the *Purusha* and so It has identified Itself with *Prakriti*. It thinks "I am the *linga-sarira*," It thinks "I am the gross matter, the gross body," and as such is enjoying pleasure and pain; but these do not really belong to the soul, they belong to this *linga-sarira*, and to the gross body. When certain nerves are hurt we feel pain. We recognize that immediately. If the nerves in our fingers were dead we could cut the fingers and not feel it. So pleasure

and pain belong to the nerve-centres. Suppose my organ of sight is destroyed, I do not feel pleasure or pain from color, although my eyes are there. So it is obvious that pleasure and pain do not belong to the soul. They belong to the mind and the body.

The soul has neither pleasure nor pain; it is the Witness of everything, the eternal Witness of things that are going on, but it takes no fruits from any work. "As the sun is the cause of sight in every eye, yet is not itself affected by the defects in any eye such is the *Purusha*."* "As a piece of crystal appears red when red flowers are placed before it, so this *Purusha* appears to be affected by pleasure or pain from the reflection cast upon It by Nature, but It remains ever unchanged."† The nearest way to describe Its state is that which

* Katha Upanishada—Chapter II. 2—11.

† Sânkhya Suttra. II. 35.

we feel during meditation. This meditative state is that in which you approach nearest to the *Purusha*. Thus we see why the meditative state is always called the highest state by the *Yogi*, for to feel one's self as one with the *Purusha* is neither a passive nor an active state, but the meditative state. This is the *Sânkhya* philosophy.

Next, the *Sânkhyas* say that this manifestation of *Prakriti* is for the Soul, that all the combinations of the materials of It are for something outside of It. So these combinations which we call nature, these constant changes within and arround are going on for the enjoyment of the Soul, for Its liberation, that It may gain all this experience from the lowest to the highest: and when It has gained it, the Soul finds that it never was in *Prakriti* but was entirely separate, and It finds that It is indestructible, that It neither goes nor

comes, that going to heaven and being born again belong to *Prakriti* and not to Itself. So the soul becomes free. Thus all *Prakriti* is working for the enjoyment and experience of the Soul and It is getting this experience in order to reach the goal, and that goal is freedom. These Souls are many, according to the *Sânkhya* philosophy. There is an infinite number of them. And the other conclusion is that there is no God, no Creator of the universe. *Prakriti* herself being sufficient to produce all these forms, God is not necessary, say the *Sânkhyas.*

Now we shall have to contest these three positions of the *Sânkhyas*. First that intelligence or anything of that sort does not belong to the Soul, but that it belongs entirely to *Prakriti*, the Soul being simply qualitiless, colorless. The second point is that there is no God, and Vedânta will show that without a God there cannot be any

explanation whatever. Thirdly, we shall have to contend that there cannot be many Souls, that there cannot be an infinite number of them, that there is only One Soul in the universe, and that One is appearing as many.

We will take the first proposition, that intelligence and reason belong entirely to *Prakriti*, and not to the Soul. The Vedânta says that the Soul is in its essence unlimited or absolute Existence-Knowledge-Bliss ; but we agree with the *Sânkhyas* that, that which they call intelligence is a compound. For instance, let us look at our perceptions. We remember that the *chitta* (or the "mind-stuff") is what is combining all these things, and upon which all these impressions are made, and from which reactions come. Suppose there is something outside. I see the blackboard. How does the knowledge of it come ? The blackboard itself is unknown, I can never

know it. It is what the German philosophers call the "thing in itself." That blackboard, that "X," is acting on my mind, and the *chitta* reacts. The *chitta* is like a lake: If you throw a stone upon a lake, as soon as the stone strikes it, a reactionary wave comes towards the stone. This wave is what you really see. And this wave is not like the stone at all, it is a wave. So that blackboard, "X," is the stone which strikes the mind and the mind throws up a wave towards that object which strikes it, and this wave which is thrown towards it is what we call the blackboard. I see you. You as you really are is unknown and unknowable. You are "X" and you act upon my mind, and the mind throws a wave towards the point from which the action came, and that wave is what I call Mr. or Mrs. So-and-So.

There are two elements in this, one from inside and the other from outside, and

the combination of these two, "X" plus mind, is our external universe. All knowledge is by reaction. In the case of a whale it has been determined by calculation how long after its tail is struck, its mind reacts upon the tail and the tail feels the pain. Take the case of the pearl oyster, in which the pearl is formed by the oyster throwing its own juice around the grain of sand that enters the shell and irritates him. There are two things which cause the pearl. First the oyster's own juice, and second the blow from outside. So is my knowledge of this table, "X" plus my mind. The very attempt to know it will be made by the mind; therefore the mind will give some of its own substance to enable it to understand, and when we understand it, it has become a compound thing,—"X" plus the mind. Similarly in internal perception; when we want to know ourselves. The real Self, which is within us, is also unknown

and unknowable. Let us call it "Y." When I want to know myself as Mr. So-and-So the "Y" has to appear as "Y" plus the mind. That "Y" strikes a blow on the mind, when I want to know myself and the mind must throw a blow upon the "Y" also. So our knowledge of the whole world is "X" plus mind (the external world), and "Y" plus mind (the internal world). We shall see later how the Advaitist idea can be demonstrated mathematically.

"X" and "Y" are simply the algebraic unknown quantities. We have seen that all knowledge is a combination, and so is this knowledge of the world, or the universe, a combination, and so is intelligence similarly a combination. If it is internal intelligence or mental experience it is "Y" plus the mind, if an external intelligence or experience of an object, it is "X" plus the mind. All internal knowledge is a combination of "Y" plus the mind and all

knowledge of external matter is a combination of "X" plus the mind. We first take the internal group. The intelligence which we see in nature cannot be wholly in nature, because intelligence itself is a compound of "Y" plus the mind and "Y" comes from the Self. So the intelligence that we know is a compound of the power of the light of the soul plus nature. Similarly, the existence which we know must be a compound of "X" plus the mind. We find therefore that in these three factors, I exist, I know and I am blessed, (the idea that I have no want, which comes from time to time) is the central idea, the grand basic idea of our life, and in proportion as this centre or basis becomes limited, and becomes a compound, we think it happiness or misery. These factors manifest as existence phenomenal, knowledge phenomenal, and love phenomenal. Every man exists, and every man must know, and

every man is made for bliss. He cannot help it. So through all existence. Animals and plants, from the lowest to the highest existence, all must love. You may not call it love ; but they must all exist, must all know and must all love. So this existence which we know is a compound of "X" and the mind, and knowledge, is a compound of that "Y" inside plus mind, and that love also is a compound of that "Y" and mind. Therefore these three factors which come from inside and are combining themselves with the external things to manufacture phenomenal existence, knowledge and love, are called by the Vedantists "Existence Absolute, Knowledge Absolute, Bliss Absolute."

That Absolute Existence which is limitless, which is unmixed, uncombined, which knows no change, is the free Soul, and that Real Existence, when it gets mixed up, muddled up, as it were, with the elements

of nature is what we call human existence. It becomes limited and manifests as plant life, animal life, human life, just as infinite space is apparently limited by the walls of this room, or by any other enclosure. That Knowledge Absolute means not the knowledge we know, not intelligence, not reason, not instinct, but that which when it becomes manifested we call by these names. When that Knowledge Absolute becomes limited we call it intuition, and when it becomes still more limited we call it reason, instinct, etc. That Knowledge Absolute is *Vijnâna*. The nearest translation of it is "all-knowingness." There is no combination in it. It is the nature of the soul. That Bliss Absolute when it becomes limited we call love, attraction for the gross body, or the fine bodies, or for ideas. These are but distorted manifestations of this blessedness which is not a quality of the soul, but the essence, the inherent

nature of the soul. Absolute Existence, Absolute Knowledge, and Absolute Blessedness are not qualities of the soul, but its essence ; there is no difference between them and the soul. And the three are one ; we see the one thing in three different lights. They are beyond all knowledge and by their reflection *Prakriti* appears to be intelligent.

It is that eternal Knowledge Absolute of the Self percolating through the mind of man that becomes our reason and intelligence. It varies according to the medium through which it is shining. There is no difference as soul between me and the lowest animal, only his brain is a poorer medium through which the knowledge shines, and we call it instinct. In man the brain is much finer, so the manifestation is much clearer, and in the highest man it has become entirely clear, like a piece of glass. So with existence ; this existence which we

know, this limited bit of existence is simply a reflection of that Existence Absolute which is the nature of the soul. So with bliss ; that which we call love or attraction is but the reflection of the eternal blessedness of the Self, because with these manifestations come limitations, but the unmanifested, the natural, essential existence of the soul is unlimited, to that blessedness there can be no limit. But in human love there are limitations. I may love you one day, I may cease to love you the next. My love increases one day, decreases the next, because it is only a limited manifestation. The first thing therefore that we find against Kapila is that he conceives the soul to be a mere qualitiless, colorless, inactive something. Vedânta teaches that it is the essence of all Existence, Knowledge, and Bliss ; infinitely higher than all knowledge that we know, infinitely more blessed than any human

love that we can think of, infinitely existing. The soul never dies. Death and birth are simply unthinkable in connection with the Self, because it is Existence Absolute.

The second point where we will contend with Kapila is with regard to his idea of God. Just as this series of limited manifestations of *Prakriti*, beginning with the individual intellect and ending with the individual body, requires the Self behind as the ruler and governor on the throne, so in the Cosmos, we must enquire what the universal Intelligence, the universal Mind, the universal fine and gross materials have as their ruler and governor? How will that series become complete without one universal Self behind it as its ruler and governor? If we deny that there is a universal governor, we must deny there is a soul behind the lesser series, because the whole universe is a

repetition of the same plan. When we know one lump of clay we know the nature of all clay. If we can analyze one human being, we shall have analyzed the whole universe, because it is all built on the same plan. Therefore if it be true that behind this individual series there stands one who is beyond all nature, who is not composed of materials, the *purusha*, the very same logic will apply to this universe, and this universe too will require such a Soul. The Universal Soul which is behind the modifications of *Prakriti* is called by Vedânta *Isvara*, the Supreme Ruler, God.

Now comes the more difficult point to fight. There can be but one Soul. To begin with, we can give the *Sânkhyas* a good blow by taking up their theories and proving that each soul must be omnipresent, because it is not composed of anything. Everything that is limited must be

limited by something else. Here is the existence of the table. Its existence is circumscribed by many things, and we find that every limitation presupposes some limiting thing. If we think of space, we have to think of it as a little circle, but beyond that is more space. We cannot imagine a limited space in any other way. It can only be understood and perceived through the infinite. To perceive the finite, in every case we must apprehend the infinite ; both stand or fall together. When you think of time, you have also to think of time beyond any particular period of time. The latter is limited time and the larger is unlimited time. Wherever you endeavor to perceive the finite, you will find it impossible to separate it from the infinite. If this be the case, we shall prove thereby that this Self must be infinite, omnipresent. Then comes a fine question. Can the omnipresent, the infinite

be two ? Suppose there are two infinites, one will limit the other. Suppose there are two infinites,—A and B ; the infinite "A" limits the infinite "B," because the infinite " B " you can say is not the infinite " A, " and the infinite " A " it can be said is not the infinite " B. " Therefore there can be but one infinite. Secondly, the infinite cannot be divided. Infinity divided into any number of parts must still be infinity, for it cannot be separated from itself. Suppose there is an infinite ocean of water, could you take up one drop from there ? If you could, that ocean would no longer be infinite, that drop would limit it. The infinite cannot be divided by any means.

But there are stronger proofs that the Self is One. Not only so, but that the whole universe is one. We will once more take up our "X" and "Y". We have shown how what we call the external

world is "X plus mind," and the internal world "Y plus mind." "X" and "Y" are both unknown quantities, unknown and unknowable. What is the mind? The mind is "time, space and causation." These form the very essence of the mind. You can never think without time, you can never conceive of anything without space, and you can never imagine anything without causation. These three are the forms in which both "X" and "Y" are caught, and become limited by the mind. Beyond them there is nothing else in the constitution of the mind. Take off these three forms which of themselves do not exist,—what remains? It is all one; "X" and "Y" are one. It is only this mind, this form, that has limited them apparently, and made them differ as internal and external world. "X" and "Y" are both unknown and unknowable. We cannot attribute any quality to them. As such they

are both the same. That which is qualitiless and attributeless and absolute must be one. There cannot be two absolutes. When there are no qualities there can be only One. "X" and "Y" are both without qualities because they take qualities only in the mind, therefore this "X" and "Y" are one.

The whole universe is One. There is only One Self in the universe, only One Existence, and that One Existence, when it is passing through the forms of time, space and causation, is called Intelligence, Self-consciousness, fine matter, gross matter, etc. All physical and mental forms, everything in the universe is that One, appearing in various ways. When a little bit of it gets into this network of time, space and causation, it apparently takes forms ; remove the network and it is all One. This whole universe is all one, and is called in the Advaitist philosophy

Brahman. *Brahman* appearing behind the universe is called God ; appearing behind the little universe—the microcosm, is the soul. This very "Self" or Âtman therefore is God in man. There is only one *Purusha*, and He is called God, and when God and man are analyzed they are one. The universe is you yourself, the undivided you ; you are throughout this universe. "In all hands you work, through all mouths you eat, through all nostrils you breathe, through all minds you think."* The whole universe is you ; this universe is your body ; you are the universe, both formed and unformed. You are the soul of the universe, its body also. You are God, you are the angels, you are man, you are the animals, you are the plants, you are the minerals, you are everything ; all manifestation is you. Whatever exists is you—the *real* "You"—the one undivided Self—

* Compare Gita XIII. 13.

not the little, limited personality that you have been regarding as yourself.

The question now arises,—how have you, the Infinite Being, become broken into parts, as Mr. So-and-So, the animals and so on? The answer is that all this division is only apparent. We know that the infinite cannot be divided, therefore this idea—that you are a part only—has no reality, and never will have; and this idea that you are Mr. So-and-so was never true at any time; it is but a dream. Know this and be free. That is the Advaitist conclusion. "I am neither the mind, nor the body, nor am I the organs; I am Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute; I am He, I am He."* This is knowledge, and everything besides this is ignorance. Everything that is, is but ignorance, the result of ignorance. Where is knowledge for me, for I am knowledge itself! Where

* Sankarâcharya's Nirvan Satak I.

is life for me, for I am life itself! Life is a secondary manifestation of my nature. I am sure I live, for I am life, the one Being. Nothing exists except through me, and in me, and as me. I am manifested as the elements, but I am the One, free. Who seeks freedom? Nobody seeks freedom. If you think that you are bound, you remain bound; you make your own bondage. If you realize that you are free, you are free this moment. This is knowledge, the knowledge of freedom and freedom is the goal of all nature.

IV

THE FREE SOUL

WE have seen that the analysis of the *Sânkhyas* stops with the duality of existence, *Prakriti* and souls. There are an infinite number of souls, which, being simple, cannot die, and must therefore be separate from *Prakriti*. *Prakriti* in itself changes and manifests all these phenomena, and the soul, according to the *Sânkhyas* is inactive. It is a simple by itself, and *Prakriti* works out all these phenomena for the liberation of the soul, and liberation consists in the soul's discriminating that it is not Nature. At the same time we have seen that the *Sânkhyas* were bound to admit that every soul was omnipresent. Being a simple the soul cannot be limited, because all limitation comes either through time, space, or

causation. The soul being entirely beyond these cannot have any limitation. To have limitation one must be in space, which means that it must have a body, and that which has a body must be in *Prakriti*. If the soul had form, it would be identified with *Prakriti*; therefore the soul is formless, and that which is formless cannot be said to exist here, there, or anywhere. It must be omnipresent. Beyond this the *Sânkhya* philosophy does not go.

The first argument of the Vedantists against this is that this analysis is not a perfect one. If this *Prakriti* be a simple, and the soul is also a simple, there will be two simples, and all the arguments that apply in the case of the soul to show that it is omnipresent, will apply equally in the case of *Prakriti*, and that too will be beyond all time, space, and causation, and as the result there will be no change or manifestation. Then will come the diffi-

culty of having two simples, or two absolutes, which is impossible. What is the solution of the Vedantist? His solution is that, it requires some sentient being as the motive power behind, to make the mind think and *Prakriti* work, because *Prakriti* in all its modifications, from gross matter up to *Mahat* (Intelligence) is simply insentient. Now, says the Vedantist, this sentient being which is behind the whole universe is what we call *God*, and consequently this universe is not different from Him. It is He Himself who has become this universe. He not only is the instrumental cause of this universe, but also the material cause. Cause is never different from effect, the effect is but the cause reproduced in another form. We see that every day. So this Being is the cause of *Prakriti*. All the forms and phases of Vedânta, either dualistic, or qualified-monistic, or monistic, first take this position,

—that God is not only the instrumental but also the efficient cause of this universe, that everything which exists is He. The second step in Vedânta is that these souls are also a part of God, one spark of that Infinite Fire. "As from a mass of fire millions of small particles fly, even so from this Ancient One have come all these souls."* So far so good, but it does not yet satisfy. What is meant by a part of the Infinite? The Infinite is indivisible; there cannot be parts of the Infinite. The Absolute cannot be divided. What is meant therefore by the expression that all these sparks are from Him? The Advaitist, the non-dualistic Vedantist, solves the problem by maintaining that there is really no part; that each soul is really not a part of the Infinite, but actually *is* the Infinite *Brahman*. Then how can there be so many souls? The sun reflected from millions of

* **Mundakopanishada II. 1.**

globules of water appears to be millions of suns, and in each globule is a miniature picture of the sun-form ; so all these souls are but reflections and not real. They are not the real " I " which is the God of this universe, the one undivided Being of the universe. And so all these little different beings, men, animals, etc., are but reflections, and not real. They are simply illusory reflections upon *Prakriti*. There is but one Infinite Being in the universe, and that Being appears as you and as I, but this appearance of division is after all delusion. He has not been divided, but only appears to be divided. This apparent division is caused by looking at Him through the network of time, space, and causation. When I look at God through the network of time, space, and causation, I see Him as the material world. When I look at Him from a little higher plane, yet through the same network, I see Him

as an animal, a little higher as a man, a little higher as a god, but yet He is the One Infinite Being of the universe, and that Being we are. I am That, and you are That. Not parts of It, but the whole of It. "It is the Eternal Knower standing behind the whole phenomena; He Himself is the phenomena." He is both the subject and the object, He is the "I" and the "You." How is this? "How to know the knower?"* The Knower cannot know himself. I see everything but cannot see myself. The Self, the Knower, the Lord of all, the Real Being, is the cause of all the vision that is in the universe, but it is impossible for Him to see Himself or know Himself, excepting through reflection. You cannot see your own face excepting in a mirror, and so the Self cannot see its own nature until it is reflected, and this whole universe therefore

* Brihadâranyaka Upanishada V. 15.

is the Self trying to realize Itself. This reflection is thrown back first from the protoplasm, then from plants and animals, and so on and on from better and better reflectors, until the best reflector,—the perfect man,—is reached. Just as a man who, wanting to see his face, looks first in a little pool of muddy water, and sees just an outline. Then he comes to clearer water, and sees a better image, then to a piece of shining metal, and sees a still better image, and at last to a looking-glass, and sees himself reflected as he is. Therefore the perfect man is the highest reflection of that Being, who is both subject and object. You now find why man instinctively worships everything, and how perfect men are instinctively worshipped as God in every country. You may talk as you like, but it is they who are bound to be worshipped. That is why men worship Incarnations, such as Christ or Buddha.

They are the most perfect manifestations of the eternal Self. They are much higher than all the conceptions of God that you or I can make. A perfect man is much higher than such conceptions. In him the circle becomes complete; the subject and the object become one. In him all delusions go away and in their place comes the realization that he has always been that perfect Being. How came this bondage then? How was it possible for this perfect Being to degenerate into the imperfect? How was it possible that the free became bound? The *Advaitist* says he was never bound, but was always free. Various clouds of various colors come before the sky. They remain there a minute and then pass away. It is the same eternal blue sky stretching there forever. The sky never changes; it is the cloud that is changing. So you are always perfect, eternally perfect. Nothing ever

changes your nature, or ever will. All these ideas that I am imperfect, I am a man, or a woman, or a sinner, or I am the mind, I have thought, I will think, all are hallucinations ; you never think, you never had a body ; you never were imperfect. You are the blessed Lord of this universe, the one Almighty ruler of everything that is and ever will be, the one mighty ruler of these suns and stars and moons and earths and plants, and all the little bits of our universe. It is through you the sun shines, and the stars shed their lustre, and the earth becomes beautiful. It is through your blessedness that they all love and are attracted to each other. You are in all, and you are all. Whom to avoid, and whom to take ? You are the all in all. When this knowledge comes delusion immediately vanishes.

I was once travelling in the desert in India. I travelled for over a month and always found the most beautiful landscapes

before me, beautiful blending of trees and lakes and all things. One day I was very thirsty and I wanted to have a drink at one of these lakes, but when I approached that lake it vanished. Immediately with a blow came into my brain the idea that this was a mirage about which I had read all my life, and then I remembered and smiled at my folly, that for the last month all the beautiful landscapes and lakes I had been seeing were this mirage, but I could not distinguish them then. The next morning I again began my march ; there was the lake and the landscape, but with it immediately came the idea, "This is a mirage." Once known it had lost its powers of illusion. So this illusion of the universe will break one day. The whole of this will vanish, melt away. This is realization. Philosophy is no joke or talk. It will be realized ; this body will vanish, this earth and everything will vanish, this idea that

I am the body, or the mind, will for some time vanish, or if the *Karma* is ended it will disappear never to come back ; but if one part of the *Karma* remains,—as a potter's wheel after the potter has finished the pot, will sometimes go on from the past momentum—the body, when this delusion has vanished altogether, will go on for some time. Again this world will come, men and women and animals will come, just as the mirage came the next day, but not with the same force, for along with it will come the idea that I know its nature now, and it will cause no bondage, no more pain, nor grief, nor misery. Whenever anything miserable will come, the mind will be able to say, "I know you as hallucination." When a man has reached that state he is called *jivan mukta*, "living free," free even while living. The aim and end in this life for the *Jnâna Yogi* is to become this *jivan mukta*, living freedom.

He is *jivan mukta* who can live in this world without being attached. He is like the lotus leaves in water, which are never wet by the water. He is the highest of human beings, nay, the highest of all beings, for he has realized his identity with the Absolute, he has realized that he is one with God. So long as you think you have the least difference from God, fear will seize you, but when you have known that you are He, that there is no difference, entirely no difference, between you and Him, that you are all of Him, and the whole of Him, all fear ceases. "There who sees whom ? Who worships whom ? Who talks to whom ? Who hears whom ? Where one sees another, where one talks to another, where one hears another, it is in law. Where none sees none, where none speaks to none that is the highest, that is the great, that is the *Brahman*."* Being

* Brihadâranyaka Upanishada V. 15.

That, you are always That. What will become of the world then ? What good shall we do to the world ? Such questions do not arise. "What becomes of my gingerbread if I become old ?" says the baby. "What becomes of my marbles if I grow, so I will not grow," says the boy. "What will become of my dolls if I grow old ?" says the little child. It is the same question in connection with this world ; it has no existence in the past, present, or future. If we have known the *Âtman* as It is, if we have known that there is nothing else but this *Âtman*, that everything else is but a dream, with no existence in reality, then this world with its poverties, its miseries, its wickedness and its goodness will cease to disturb us. If they do not exist, for whom and for what shall we take trouble ? This is what the *Jnâna Yogis* teach. Therefore, dare to be free, dare to go as far as your thought leads, and

dare to carry that out in your life. It is very hard to come to *jnânam.* It is for the bravest and most daring, who dare to smash all idols, not only intellectual, but also of the senses.

This body is not I ; it must go. All sorts of curious things may come out of this teaching. A man stands up and says "I am not the body, therefore my headache must be cured !"—but where is the headache if not in his body ? Let a thousand headaches and a thousand bodies come and go. What is that to me ? "I have neither birth nor death ; father nor mother I never had ; friends and foes I have none, because they are all I ; I am my own friend and I am my own enemy ; I am Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute ; I am He, I am He."* If in a thousand bodies I am suffering from fever and other ills, in millions of bodies I am healthy. If in a

* Sankarâchârya's Nirvân Satak.

thousand bodies I am starving, in other thousand bodies I am feasting. If in thousands of bodies I am suffering misery, in thousands of bodies I am happy. Who shall blame whom, who praise whom? "Whom to seek, whom to avoid?" I seek none, nor avoid any, for I am all the universe, I praise myself, I blame myself, I suffer for myself, I am happy at my own will, I am free. This is the *Jnâni*, brave and daring. Let the whole universe tumble down; he smiles and says it never existed, it was all hallucination. Thus he sees the universe really disappear before his eyes and questions wondering "Where was it? Whether has it melted away?"

Before going into the practical part, we will take up one more intellectual question. So far the logic is tremendously rigorous. If a man reasons, there is no place for him to stand until he comes to this, that there is but One Existence, that everything else

is nothing. There is no other way left for rational mankind but to take this view. But how is it that what is infinite, ever perfect, ever blessed, Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute has come under these delusions? It is the same question that has been asked all the world over in all times. In the vulgar form the question becomes "How did sin come into this world?" This is the most vulgar and sensuous form of the question, and the other is the more philosophic form, but the answer is the same. The same question has been asked in various grades and fashions, but in its lower forms it finds no solution, because the stories of apples and serpents and women do not give the explanation. In that state, the question is childish and so is the answer. But the question has assumed very high proportions now. "How this illusion came?" and the answer is as fine. The answer is that we cannot expect

any answer to an impossible question. The very question is impossible in terms. You have no right to ask that question. Why ? What is perfection ? That which is beyond time, space and causation. That is perfect. Then you ask how the perfect became imperfect. In logical language the question may be put in this form—"How did that which is beyond causation become caused ?" You contradict yourself. You first admit it is beyond causation, and then ask what causes it. Questions can only be asked within the limits of causation. As far as time and space and causation extend, so far can this question be asked. But beyond that it will be nonsense to ask it, because the question is illogical. Within time, space and causation it can never be answered, and what answer may lie beyond these limits can only be known when we have transcended them, therefore the wise will let this question rest. When

a man is ill, he devotes himself to curing his disease, without insisting that he must first learn how he came to have it.

There is another form of this question, a little lower, but more practical and illustrative. What produced this delusion? Can any reality produce delusion? Certainly not. We see that one delusion produces another, and so on. It is delusion always that produces delusion. It is disease that produces disease, and not health that produces disease. The wave is the same thing as the water, the effect is the cause in another form. The effect is delusion, and therefore the cause must be delusion. What produced this delusion? Another delusion. And so on without beginning. The only question that remains for you to ask is, does not this admission break your monism, because you get two existences in the universe, one yourself, and the other the delusion? The answer is,—

delusion cannot be called an existence. Thousands of dreams come into your life, but do not form any part of your life. Dreams come and go ; they have no existence ; to call delusion existence will be sophistry. Therefore there is only one individual existence in the universe, ever free, and ever blessed, and that is what you are. This is the last conclusion reached by the *Advaitists*. It may then be asked, what becomes of all these various forms of worship ? They will remain ; they are simply groping in the dark for light, and through this groping light will come. We have just seen that the Self cannot see Itself. All our knowledge is within the network of *Mâyâ* (unreality), and beyond that is freedom. Within the network there is slavery, it is all under law. Beyond that there is no law. So far as the universe is concerned, existence is ruled by law, and beyond that is freedom. As long as you

are in the network of time, space and causation, to say you are free is nonsense, because in that network all is under rigorous law, sequence and consequence. Every thought that you think is caused, every feeling has been caused ; to say that the will is free is sheer nonsense. It is only when the infinite existence comes, as it were, into this network of *Mâyâ* that it takes the form of will. Will is a portion of that being caught in the network of *Mâyâ*, and therefore "free-will" is a misnomer. It means nothing,—sheer nonsense. So is all this talk about freedom. There is no freedom in *Mâyâ*.

Every one is as much bound in thought, word, deed, and mind, as a piece of stone or this table. That I talk to you now is as rigorously in causation as that you listen to me. There is no freedom until you go beyond *Mâyâ*. That is the real freedom of the soul. Men, however

sharp and intellectual, however clearly they see the force of the logic that nothing here can be free, are all compelled to think they are free; they cannot help. No work can go on until we begin to say we are free. It means that the freedom we talk about is the glimpse of the blue sky through the clouds, and that the real freedom,—the blue sky itself,—is behind. True freedom cannot exist in the midst of this delusion, this hallucination, this nonsense of the world, this universe of the senses, body and mind. All these dreams, without beginning or end, uncontrolled and uncontrollable, ill-adjusted, broken, inharmonious, form our idea of this universe. In a dream, when you see a giant with twenty heads chasing you, and you are flying from him, you do not think it is inharmonious; you think it is proper and right. So is this law. All that you call law is simply chance without meaning. In this dream state you call it

law. Within *Mâyâ*, so far as this law of time, space and causation exists, there is no freedom, and all these various forms of worship are within this *Mâyâ*. The idea of God and the ideas of brute and of man are within this *Mâyâ*, and as such equally hallucinations; all of them are dreams. But you must take care not to argue like some extraordinary men of whom we hear at the present time. They say the idea of God is a delusion, but the idea of this world is true. Both ideas stand or fall by the same logic. He alone has the right to be an atheist who denies this world, as well as the other. The same argument is for both. The same mass of delusion extends from God to the lowest animal, from a blade of grass to the Creator. They stand or fall by the same logic. The same person who sees falsity in the idea of God ought also to see it in the idea of his own body, or his own mind. When God

vanishes, then also vanish the body and mind, and when both vanish, that which is the Real Existence remains forever. "There the eyes cannot go, nor the speech, nor the mind. We cannot see it, neither know it." And we now understand that so far as speech and thought and knowledge, and intellect go, it is all within this *Mâyâ*, within bondage. Beyond that is Reality. There neither thought, nor mind, nor speech, can reach.

So far it is intellectually all right, but then comes the practice. The real work in these classes is the practice. Are any practices necessary to realize this one-ness? Most decidedly. It is not that you become this *Brahman*. You are already that. It is not that you are going to become God or perfect; you are already perfect, and whenever you think you are not, it is a delusion. This delusion which says that you are Mr. So-and-So, or Mrs. So-and-So, can be got

rid of by another delusion, and that is practice. Fire will eat fire, and you can use one delusion to conquer another delusion. One cloud will come and brush away another cloud, and then both will go away. What are these practices then? We must always bear in mind that we are not going to be free, but are free already. Every idea that we are bound is a delusion. Every idea that we are happy or unhappy, is a tremendous delusion; and another delusion will come,—that we shall have to work and worship and struggle to be free,—and this will chase out the first delusion, and then both will stop.

The fox is considered very unholy by the Mohammedans, and so is the dog by the Hindus. So, if a fox or a dog touches any bit of food it has to be thrown out, it cannot be eaten by any man. In a certain Mohammedan house a fox entered and took a little bit of food from the table, ate

it up and fled. The man was a poor man, and had prepared a very nice feast for himself, and that feast was made unholy, and he could not eat it. So he went to a *Mulla*, a priest, and said: "This has happened to me; a fox came and took a mouthful out of my meal; what can be done? I had prepared a feast and wanted so much to eat it, and now comes this fox and destroys the whole thing." The *Mulla* thought for a minute, and then found only one solution and said: "The only way is for you to get a dog, and make him eat a bit out of the same plate. Now because dogs and foxes are eternally quarrelling, the food that was left by the fox will go into your stomach, and that not eaten by the dog will go there, and destroy each other and thus all will be purified." We are very much in the same predicament. This is an hallucination that we are imperfect, and we take up another, that we have to

practice to become perfect. Then one will chase the other, as we can use one thorn to extract another and then throw both away. There are people for whom it is sufficient knowledge to hear, "Thou art That." With a flash this universe goes away and the real nature shines, but others have to struggle hard to get rid of this idea of bondage.

The first question is, who are fit to become *Jnâna Yogis?* Those who are equipped with these requisites. First, renunciation of all fruits of work and of all enjoyments in this life or another life. If you are the creator of this universe whatever you desire you will have, because you will create it for yourself. It is only a question of time. Some get it immediately; with others the past *samskâras* (impressions) stand in the way of getting their desires. We give the first place to desires for enjoyment, either

in this or another life. Deny there is any life at all, because life is only another name for death. Deny that you are a living being. Who cares for life? Life is one of these hallucinations and death is its counterpart. Joy is one part of these hallucinations, and misery the other part, and so on. What have you to do with life or death? These are all creations of the mind. This is called giving up desires of enjoyment either in this life or another.

Then comes controlling the mind, calming it so that it will not break into waves and have all sorts of desires; holding the mind steady, not allowing it to get into waves from external or internal causes, controlling the mind perfectly just by the power of will. The *Jnâna Yogi* does not take any one of these physical helps, or mental helps, simply philosophic reasoning, knowledge and his own will, these are the instrumentality he believes

in. Next comes *Titikshâ*, forbearance, bearing all miseries without murmuring, without complaining. When an injury comes, do not mind it. If a tiger comes, stand there. Who flies? There are men who practice *titikshâ*, and succeed in it. There are men who sleep on the banks of the Ganges in the mid-summer sun of India, and in winter float in the waters of the Ganges for a whole day; they do not care. Men sit in the snow of the Himâlayas, and do not care to wear any garment. What is heat? What is cold? Let things come and go, what is that to me, I am not the body. It is hard to believe this in these Western countries, but it is better to know that it is done. Just as your people are brave to jump at the mouth of a cannon, or into the midst of the battle-field, so our people are brave to think and act out their philosophy. They give up their lives for it. "I am Existence-Knowledge-

Bliss Absolute; I am He; I am He." Just as the Western ideal is to keep up luxury in practical life, so ours is to keep up the highest form of spirituality, to demonstrate that religion is not merely frothy words, but can be carried out, every bit of it, in this life. This is *titikshâ*, to bear everything, not to complain of anything. I myself have seen men who say "I am the soul; what is the universe to me? Neither pleasure, nor pain, nor virtue, nor vice, nor heat, nor cold are anything to me." That is *titikshâ*; not running after the enjoyments of the body. What is religion? To pray: "give me this and that"? Foolish ideas of religion it is! Those who believe them have no true idea of God and soul. My Master used to say the vulture rises high and high until he becomes a speck, but his eye is always in the piece of rotten carrion on the earth. After all, what is the result of your ideas of re-

ligion? To cleanse the streets, and have more bread and clothes. Who cares for bread and clothes? Millions come and go every minute. Who cares? Why care for the joys and vicissitudes of this little world? Go beyond that if you dare; go beyond law, let the whole universe vanish, and stand alone. "I am Existence-Absolute, Knowledge-Absolute, Bliss-Absolute; I am He; I am He."

V

ONE EXISTENCE APPEARING AS MANY

We have seen how *Vairâgyam*, or renunciation, is the turning point in all these various *Yogas*. The *Karmi* (worker) renounces the fruits of his work. The *Bhakta* (devotee) renounces all little loves for the almighty and omnipresent love. The *Yogi* renounces his experiences, because his philosophy is that the whole Nature, although it is for the experience of the soul, at last brings him to know that he is not in Nature, but eternally separate from Nature. The *Jnâni* (philosopher) renounces everything, because his philosophy is that Nature never existed, neither in the past, present nor future. We have also seen how the question of

utility cannot be asked in these higher themes; it is very absurd to raise the question of utility, and even if it be raised after a proper analysis what do we find in this question? The ideal of happiness, that which brings man greater happiness is of greater utility to him than those things which do not improve his material conditions or bring him such great happiness. All the sciences are for this one end, to bring happiness to humanity and that which brings the larger amount of happiness, mankind takes and gives up that which brings a lesser amount of happiness. We have seen how happiness is either in the body, or in the mind, or in the *Âtman.* With animals, and in the lowest of human beings, who are very much like animals, happiness is all in the body. No man can eat with the same pleasure as a famished dog, or a wolf; so, in the dog and the wolf the ideal of happiness is concerned

entirely with the body. In men we find a higher plane of happiness, that of thought, and in the *Jnâni* there is the highest plane of happiness in the Self, the *Âtman*. So to the philosopher this knowledge of the Self is of the highest utility, because it gives him the highest happiness possible. Sense gratifications or physical things cannot be of the highest utility to him because he does not find in them the same pleasure that he finds in knowledge itself; and after all, knowledge is the one goal, and is really the highest happiness that we know. All who work in ignorance are, as it were, "the draught animals of the *devas*." The word *deva* is here used in the sense of a wise man. All the people that work, and toil, and labor like machines do not really enjoy life, but it is the wise man who enjoys. A rich man buys a picture at a cost of a hundred thousand dollars perhaps, but it is the man who understands art

that enjoys it; and if the buyer is without knowledge of art it is useless to him, he is only the owner. All over the world, it is the wise man who enjoys the happiness of the world. The ignorant man never enjoys; he has to work for others unconsciously.

Thus far we have seen the theories of these Advaitist philosophers, how there is but one *Âtman;* there cannot be two. We have seen how in the whole of this universe there is but One Existence, and that One Existence when seen through the senses is called the world, the world of matter. When It is seen through the mind It is called the world of thoughts and ideas, and when It is seen as it is, then It appears as the One Infinite Being. You must bear this in mind; it is not that there is a soul in man, although I had to take that for granted in order to explain it at first, but that there is only One Existence, and that

one the *Âtman*, the Self, and when this is perceived through the senses, through sense imageries, It is called the body. When It is perceived through thought, It is called the mind. When It is perceived in Its own nature, It appears as the *Âtman*, the One Only Existence. So, it is not that there are three things in one, the body and the mind and the Self,—although that was a convenient way of putting it in the course of explanation—but all is that *Âtman*, and that one Being is sometimes called the body, sometimes the mind, and sometimes the Self, according to different visions. There is but one Being which the ignorant call the world. When a man goes higher in knowledge he calls the very same Being the world of thought. Again when perfect knowledge comes, all illusions vanish, and man finds it is all nothing but *Âtman*. "I am that One Existence"—this is the last conclusion. There are neither three nor

two in the universe ; it is all One. That One, under the illusion of *Mâyâ* is seen as many, just as a rope is seen as a snake. It is the very rope that is seen as a snake There are not two things there, a rope separate and a snake separate. No man sees two things there. Dualism and non-dualism are very good philosophic terms, but in perfect perception we never perceive the real and the false at the same time. We are all born monists, we cannot help it. We always perceive the one. When we perceive the rope, we do not perceive the snake at all, and when we see the snake, we do not see the rope at all ; it has vanished. When you see illusion, you do not see real men. Suppose one of your friends is coming from a distance in the street ; you know him very well, but through the haze and mist that is before you, you think it is another man. When you see your friend as another man, you

do not see your friend at all, he has vanished. You are perceiving only one person: For suppose your friend is A.; when you perceive A. as B. you do not see A. at all. So in each case you perceive only one. When you see yourself as a body, you are body and nothing else, and that is the perception of the vast majority of mankind. They may talk of soul and mind, and all such things, but what they perceive is the physical form, the touch, taste, vision, and so on. Again, with certain men, in certain states of consciousness, they perceive themselves as thought. You know, of course, the story told of Sir Humphrey Davy, who was making experiments before his class with laughing-gas, and suddenly one of the tubes broke, and the gas escaping, he breathed it in. For some moments he remained like a statue. Afterwards he told his class that when he was in that state, he actually

perceived that the whole world is made up of ideas. The gas, for a time, made him forget the consciousness of the body, and that very thing which he was seeing as the body, he began to perceive as ideas. When the consciousness rises still higher, when this little puny consciousness is transcended for ever, that which is the Reality behind shines, and we see it as the One Existence-Knowledge-Bliss, the one *Âtman*, the Universal Being. "One that is only knowledge itself, One that is bliss itself, beyond all compare, beyond all limit, ever free, never bound, infinite as the sky, undivided and unchangeable, —such an One will manifest Himself in your heart in meditation."*

How does the Advaitist theory explain all these various phases of heavens and hells and all these various ideas we find in all religions? When a man dies it is said

* Vivekachudamani 410.

that he goes to heaven or hell, goes here or there, or that when a man dies he is born again in another body, either in heaven or in another world, or somewhere. These are all hallucinations. Nobody is ever born or dies, really speaking. There is neither heaven nor hell, nor this world; all three never really existed. Tell a child a lot of ghost stories, and let him go out into the street in the evening. There is a little stump of a tree. What does the child see? A ghost, with hands stretched out, ready to seize him. Suppose a man comes from the corner of the street, wanting to meet his sweetheart; he sees that stump of the tree as the girl. A policeman coming from the street corner sees the stump as a thief. The thief sees it as a policeman. It is the same stump of a tree that was seen in various ways. The stump is the reality, and the visions of the stump are the projections of the various

minds. There is one Being, this Self; It neither comes nor goes. When a man is ignorant, he wants to go to heaven or some place, and all his life he has been thinking and thinking of this, and when this earth dream vanishes he sees this world as a heaven, with *devas* and angels flying about, and all such things. If a man all his life desires to meet his forefathers he gets them all, from Adam downwards, because he creates them. If a man is still more ignorant and has always been frightened by fanatics with ideas of hell, when he dies he will see this very world as hell, with all sorts of punishments. All that is meant by dying or being born is simply a change in the plane of vision. Neither do you move, nor does that move upon which you project your vision. You are the permanent, the unchangeable. How can you go and come? It is imposible; you are omnipresent. The sky never moves, but

the clouds move over the surface of the sky, and we think that the sky itself moves. Just as you go into a railway train, and you think the land is moving. It is not so, but it is the train which is moving. So you are where you are while this dream, like these various clouds, moves. One dream follows another without connection. There is no such thing as law or connection in this world, but we are thinking that there is a great deal of connection. All of you have probably read "Alice in Wonderland." It is the most wonderful book for children written in this century. When I read it I was delighted, it was always in my head to write that sort of a book for children. What pleased me most in it was that what you think most incongruous, that is there—the want of all connection. One idea comes and jumps into another, without any connection. When you were children you thought that to be the most wonderful

connecticn. So this man brought back his thoughts of childhood, perfectly connected to him as a child, and composed this book for children: while many of these books which men write, trying to make children swallow their own ideas as men are nonsense. We too are grown up children, that is all. The world is the same unconnected thing,—"Alice in Wonderland,"—with no connection whatever. When we see things happen a number of times in a certain sequence, we call it cause and effect, and say that the thing will happen again. When this dream will change another dream will seem quite as connected as this. When we dream, the things we see all seem to be connected; during the dream we never think they are incongruous; it is only when we wake that we see the want of connection. So when we wake from this dream of the world and compare it with the Reality, it

will all be found incongruous nonsense, a mass of incongruity passing before us, we do not know whence or whither; but we know it will end. And this is called *Mâyâ*. Like masses of fleeting, fleecy clouds is all this changing existence, and the sun itself, the unchanging, is you. When you look at that unchanging Existence from the outside, you call it God, and when you look at it from the inside you call it yourself. It is but one. There is no God separate from you, no God higher than you, the real "you." All the Gods are little beings to you, all the ideas of God and Father in heaven are but your reflection. God Himself is your image. "God created man after His own image"—that is wrong. Man creates God after his own image—this is right. Throughout the universe we are creating gods after our own image. We create the god, and fall down at his feet and

worship ; and when this dream comes, we love it !

This is a good point to understand,—that the sum and substance of this morning's lecture is that there is but One Existence, and that One Existence seen through different mediums appears either as earth, or heaven, or hell, or God, or ghosts, or men or demons, or world, or all these things. But—"he who sees that One, who never changes among these diverse changing things, he who sees that One Life in this floating universe of death, he who realizes within himself the One who fulfils the desires of these many, unto him belongs eternal peace ; unto none else, unto none else."* This One Existence has to be realized. How, is the next question. How is it to be realized ? How is this dream to be broken, how shall we wake up from this dream *that we are little men and women,* and all

* Katha Upanishada V. 13.

such things ? We are the Inflnite Being of the universe, and have become materialized into these little beings, men and women, depending upon the sweet word of one man, or the angry word of another man and so forth. What a terrible dependence, what a terrible slavery ! I who am beyond all pleasure and pain, whose reflection is the whole universe, little bits of whose life are the suns and moons and stars,—I am held down as a terrible slave. If you pinch my body I feel pain. If one says a kind word I begin to rejoice. Look at my condition,—slave of the body, slave of the mind, slave of the world, slave of a good word, slave of a bad word, slave of passion, slave of happiness, slave of life, slave of death, slave of every thing. This slavery has to be broken. How ? "This *Âtman* has first to be heard, then reasoned upon and then meditated upon."* This is the method

* *Brihadâranyaka Upanishada V. 6.*

of the Advaita *Jnâni*. The truth has to be heard, then reflected upon and then to be constantly asserted. Think always—"I am *Brahman*"; every other thought must be cast aside as weakening. Cast aside every thought that says that you are men or women. Let body go, and mind go, and gods go, and ghosts go. Let everything go but that One Existence. "Where one hears another, where one sees another, that is but small; where one does not here another, where one does not see another, that is infinite."* That is the highest, where the subject and the object become one. When I am the listener and I am the speaker, when I am the teacher and I am the taught, when I am the creator and I am the created,—then alone fear ceases; for there is not another to make us afraid. There is nothing but myself, what can frighten

* Chhândogya Upanishada XXIV.

me? This is to be heard day after day. Get rid of all other thoughts. Everything else must be thrown aside, and this is to be repeated continually, poured through the ears until it reaches the heart, until every nerve and muscle, every drop of blood tingles with the idea that I am He, I am He. Even at the gate of death say "I am He." There was a man in India, a *Sannyâsin*, who used to repeat "*Shivoham*" ("I am Bliss Eternal"), and a tiger jumped on him one day and dragged him away and killed him, and as long as he was living the sound came "*Shivoham, Shivoham.*" Even at the gate of death, in the greatest danger, in the thick of the battle-field, at the bottom of the ocean, on the tops of the highest mountains, in the thickest of the forest, tell yourself "I am He, I am He." Day and night say "I am He." It is the greatest strength; it is religion. "The weak will never reach

the *Âtman*."* Never say: "O Lord, I am a miserable sinner." Who shall help you? Yor are the help of the universe. What in this universe can help you? Where is the man, or the god, or the demon to help you? What can prevail over you? You are the god of the universe; where can you seek for help? Never help came from anywhere but from yourself. In your ignorance, every prayer that you made and that was answered, you thought was answered by some Being, but you answered the prayer yourself, unknowingly. The help came from yourself, and you fondly imagined that some one was sending help to you. There is no help for you outside of yourself; you are the creator of the universe. Like the silkworm you have built a cocoon around yourself. Who will save you? Cut your own cocoon and come out as the beautiful

* Mundaka Upanishada. III. 2—4.

butterfly, as the free soul. Then alone you will see Truth. Ever tell yourself "I am He." These are words that will burn up the dross that is in the mind, words that will bring out the tremendous energy which is within you already, the infinite power which is sleeping in your heart. This is to be brought out by constantly hearing the truth and nothing else. Wherever there is thought of weakness, approach not the place. Avoid all weakness if you want to be *Jnâni*.

Before you begin to practise, clear your mind of all doubts. Fight and reason and argue, and when you have established it in your mind that this and this alone can be the truth and nothing else, do not argue any more ; close your mouth. Hear not argumentation, neither argue yourself. What is the use of any more arguments ? You have satisfied yourself, you have decided the question. What remains ?

The truth has now to be realized, therefore why waste valuable time in vain arguments ? The truth has now to be meditated upon and every idea that strengthens you must be taken up and every thought that weakens you must be rejected. The *Bhakta* meditates upon forms and images and all such things and upon God. This is the natural process, but a slower one. The *Yogi* meditates upon various centres in his body and manipulates powers in his mind. The *Jnâni* says the mind does not exist, neither the body. This idea of the body and of the mind must go, must be driven off ; therefore it is foolish to think of them. It would be like trying to cure one ailment by bringing in another. His meditation therefore is the most difficult one, the negative ; he denies everything, and what is left is the Self. This is the most analytical way. The *Jnâni* wants to tear away the universe from the Self by

the sheer force of analysis. It is very easy to say, "I am a *Jnâni*," but very hard to be one really. "The way is long ; it is, as it were, walking on the sharp edge of a razor, yet despair not. Awake, arise, and stop not until the goal is reached," say the Vedas.*

So what is the meditation of the *Jnâni* ? He wants to rise above every idea of body or mind, to drive away the idea that he is the body. For instance, when I say "I, Swâmi," immediately the idea of the body comes. What must I do then ? I must give the mind a hard blow and say, "No, I am not the body, I am the Self." Who cares if disease comes or death in the most horrible form ? I am not the body. Why make the body nice ? To enjoy the illusion once more ? To continue the slavery ? Let it go, I am not the body. That is the way of the *Jnâni*.

* Katha Upanishada. I. 3—14.

The *Bhakta* says : "The Lord has given me this body that I may safely cross the ocean of life and I must cherish it until the journey is accomplished." The *Yogi* says : "I must be careful of the body so that I may go on steadily and finally attain liberation." The *Jnâni* feels that he cannot wait, he must reach the goal this very moment. He says : "I am free through eternity, I am never bound ; I am the God of the universe through all eternity. Who shall make me perfect ? I am perfect already." When a man is perfect he sees perfection in others. When he sees imperfection, it is his own mind projecting itself. How can he see imperfection if he has not got it in himself ? So the *Jnâni* does not care for perfection or imperfection. None exists for him. As soon as he is free, he does not see good and evil. Who sees evil and good ? He who has it in himself. Who sees the body ?

He who thinks he is the body. The moment yet get rid of the idea that you are the body, you do not see the world at all. It vanishes forever. The *Jnâni* seeks to tear himself away from this bondage of matter by the force of intellectual conviction. This is the negative way,—the "*neti, neti*" ("not this, not this").

IV

UNITY OF THE SELF

To illustrate the conclusion arrived at in our last lesson, I will read to you from one of the Upanishads* showing how these ideas were taught in India from the most ancient times.

Yajnavalkya was a great sage. You know the rule in India was that every man must give up the world when he became old. So *Yajnavalkya* said to his wife: "My beloved, here is all my money and my possessions, I am going away." She replied: "Sir, if I had this whole earth full of wealth would that give me immortality?" *Yajnavalkya* said: "No, that cannot be. Your life will be that of the rich, and that will be all, for wealth cannot give you immortality." She replied:

* Brihadâranyaka Upanishada V.

"That through which I shall become immortal, what shall I do to gain that? If you know that, tell me." *Yajnavalkya* replied: "You have always been my beloved; you are more so now by this question. Come, take your seat, and I will tell you, and when you have heard, meditate upon it." He continued: "It is not for the sake of the husband that the wife loves the husband, but for the sake of the *Âtman* (the Self) that she loves the husband, because she loves the Self. None loves the wife for the sake of the wife, but it is because he loves the Self that he loves the wife. None loves the children for the sake of the children, but because he loves the Self, therefore he loves the children. None loves wealth on account of the wealth, but because he loves the Self, therefore he loves wealth. None loves the Brahmin for the sake of the Brahmin, but because he loves the Self,

he loves the Brahmin. So none loves the *Kshatriya* for the sake of the *Kshatriya*, but because he loves the Self. Neither does anyone love the world on account of the world, but because he loves the Self. None similarly loves the gods on account of the gods, but because he loves the Self. None loves anything for that thing's sake, but it is for the Self of that thing that he loves it. This Self therefore, is to be heard, is to be reasoned, and is to be meditated upon. Oh my *Maitreyi*, when that Self has been heard, when that Self has been seen, when that Self has been realized, then all these things become known."

What does this mean ? Before us we find a curious philosophy. That the Self shines through all these various things which we call the world. The statement has been made that every love is selfishness in the lowest sense of the word ; because I love myself, therefore I love

another—this cannot be. There have been philosophers too in modern times who have said that self is the only motive power in the world. That is true, and yet it is wrong. This self is but the shadow of that real Self which is behind and love of this little self appears wrong and evil because it is limited. That very love we have for the Self, which is the universe, appears to be evil, as selfishness because it is seen through limitation. Even when a wife loves a husband, whether she knows it or not, she loves the husband for that Self. It is selfishness as it is manifested in the world, but that selfishness is really but a small part of that "Self-ness." Whenever one loves, one has to love in and through the Self.

This Self has to be known. Those that love the Self without knowing what It is, their love is selfishness. Those that love knowing what that Self is, their love

is free, they are sages. None loves the Brahmin for the Brahmin, but because he loves the Self, which is appearing through the Brahmin. "Him the Brahmin gives up who sees the Brahmin as separate from the Self. Him the *Kshatriya* gives up who sees the *Kshatriya* as separate from the Self. The world gives him up who sees this world as separate from the Self. The gods give him up who believes the gods to be separate from the Self. All things give him up who knows them as separate from the Self. These Brahmins, these *Kshatriyas*, this world, these gods, whatever exists, everything is that Self." Thus *Yajnavalkya* explains what he means by love. The difficulty comes when we particularize this love. Suppose I love a woman ; as soon as that woman is particularized, is separated, from that *Âtman* (the Self), my love will not be eternal ; it has become selfish and is likely to end in

grief, but as soon as I see that woman as the *Âtman*, that love becomes perfect, and will never suffer. So, as soon as you are attached to anything in the universe, detaching it from the universe as a whole —from the *Âtman*—then comes a reaction. With everything that we love outside the Self, grief and misery will be the result. If we enjoy everything in the Self, and as the Self, no misery or reaction will come. This is perfect bliss.

How to come to this ideal? *Yajnavalkya* goes on to tell us the process by which to reach that state. The universe is infinite; how can we take every particular thing and look at it as the *Âtman*, without knowing the *Âtman*? "With the drum, at a distance, we cannot conquer the sound produced by it by trying to control the sound waves, but as soon as we come to the drum, and put our hand on it, the sound is conquered. When a conch shell is being

blown, we cannot conquer the sound, until we come near and get hold of the shell, and then it is conquered. When the vina is being played, as soon as we come to the vina, we can control the centre of the sound, whence the sound is proceeding. As when some one is burning damp fuel, all sorts of smoke and sparks of various kinds rise, even so from this great One has been breathed out history and knowledge; everything has come out of Him. He breathed out, as it were, all knowledge. As to all water the one goal is the ocean, as to all touch the hand is the one centre, as to all smell the nose is the one centre, as of all taste the tongue is the one centre, as of all form the eyes are the one centre, as of all sounds the ears are the one centre, as of all thought the mind is the one centre, as of all knowledge the heart is the one centre, as of all work the hands are the one centre, as of all speech the organ of speech

is the one centre, as the concentrated salt is through and through the waters of the sea, yet not to be seen by the eyes ; even so, oh *Maitreyi*, is this *Âtman* not to be seen by the eyes, yet He permeates this universe. He is everything. He is concentrated knowledge. The whole universe rises from Him, and again goes down unto Him. Reaching Him, we go beyond knowledge." We here get the idea that we have all come out just like sparks from Him, and that when we know Him then we go back, and become one with Him again.

Maitreyi became frightened, just as everywhere people become frightened. She said : "Sir, here is exactly where you have thrown a confusion over me. You have frightened me by saying there will be no more gods ; all individuality will be lost. When I reach that stage shall I know that *Âtman* ? Shall I reach the unconscious

state and lose my individuality, or will the knowledge remain with me that I know Him? Will there be no one to recognize, no one to feel, no one to love, no one to hate? What will become of me?" "O *Maitreyi!*" replied her husband, "think not that I am speaking of an unconscious state, neither be frightened. This *Âtman* is indestructible, eternal in His essence; the stage where there are two is a lower one. Where there are two there one smells another, one sees another, one hears another, one welcomes another, one thinks of another, one knows another. But when the whole has become that *Âtman*, who is to be smelled by whom, who is to be seen by whom, who is to be heard by whom, who is to be welcomed by whom, who is to be known by whom? Who can know Him by whom everything is known? This *Âtman* can only be described as "*neti, neti*" (not this, not this). Incompre-

hensible, He cannot be comprehended by the intellect. Unchangeable, He never fades. Unattached, He never gets mixed up with Nature. Perfect, He is beyond all pleasure and pain. Who can know the Knower? By what means can we know Him? By no means; this is the conclusion of the sages, O *Maitreyi!* Going beyond all knowledge, is to attain Him and to attain immortality."

So far the idea is, that it is all One Infinite Being, and in It is the Real Individuality, where there is no more division, no more parts and parcels, no more such low and illusory ideas. And yet, in and through every part of this little individuality is shining that Infinite, the Real Individuality. Everything is a manifestation of the *Âtman*. How to reach to that? *Yajnavalkya* told us in the beginning that—"This *Âtman* is first to be heard, then to be reasoned, then to be

meditated upon." Thus far he has spoken about the Self, the *Âtman*, as being the essence of everything in this universe. Then reasoning on the Infinite nature of that Self and the finite nature of the human mind he comes to the conclusion that it is impossible for the finite mind to know the Knower of all—the Self. What is to be done then if we cannot know the Self? *Yajnavalkya* tells *Maitreyi* that It can be realized, although It cannot be known, and he enters upon a discourse as to how It is to be meditated upon. This universe is helpful to every being and every being is also helping this universe, for they are both part and parcel of each other, the development of the one helps the development of the other; but to the *Âtman*, the self-effulgent One, nothing can be helpful because It is perfect and infinite. All that is bliss, even in the lowest sense, is but the reflection of It. All that is good is

the reflection of that *Âtman*, and when that reflection is less clear it is called evil. When the *Âtman* is less manifested it is called darkness—evil, and when it is more manifested it is called light—goodness. That is all. This good and evil are only a question of degree, the *Âtman* more manifested or less manifested. Just take the example of our own lives. How many things we see in our childhood which we think to be good, but which really are evil, and how many things seem to be evil which are good? How our ideas change! How an idea becomes higher and higher! What we thought very good at one time, we do not think that so good now. Thus good and evil depend on the development of our minds, and do not exist objectively. The difference is only in the degree. All is a manifestation of that *Âtman*; It is being manifested in everything, only when the manifestation is

very poor we call it evil, and when it is clearer we call it good. That *Âtman* Itself is beyond both good and evil. So everything that is in the universe in first to be meditated upon as all good, because it is a manifestation of that perfect One. He is neither evil nor good ; He is perfect and the perfect can be only one. The good can be many, and the evil many, there will be degrees of variation between the good and the evil ; but the perfect is only one, and that perfect One when seen through certain kinds of covering we call different degrees of good, and when seen through other kinds we call evil. Our ideas of good and evil as to distinct things are mere superstition. There is only more good and less good and the less good we call evil. These mistaken ideas of good and evil have produced all sorts of dualistic delusions. They have gone deep into the hearts of human beings, terrorizing men

and women in all ages. All the hatred with which we hate others is caused by these foolish ideas which we have imbibed since our childhood. Our judgment of humanity has become entirely false ; we have made this beautiful earth a hell, but as soon as we can give up these false ideas of good and evil, it will become a heaven.

"This earth is blissful ('sweet' is the literal translation) to all beings, and all beings are sweet to this earth ; they all help each other. And all this sweetness is from the *Âtman*, that effulgent, immortal One." That one sweetness is manifesting itself in various ways. Wherever there is any love, any sweetness in any human being, either in a saint or a sinner, either in an angel or a murderer, either in the body or the mind or the senses, it is all He. How can there be anything but that One ? Whatever is the lowest physical enjoyment is He, and the

highest spiritual enjoyment is also He. There is no sweetness but He. Thus says *Yajnavalkya*. When you come to that state, and look upon all things with the same eyes; when you see in the drunkard's pleasure in drink or in the saints' meditation that sweetness only, then you have got the truth, and then alone you will know what happiness means, what peace means, what love means. But as long as you keep these vain distinctions, silly, childish, foolish superstitions, all sorts of misery will come. That immortal One, the effulgent One, He is the background of the whole universe, it is all His sweetness. This body is a miniature universe, as it were; and through all the powers of the body, all the enjoyments of the mind, shines that effulgent One. That self-effulgent One who is in the body, He is the *Âtman*. "This world is so sweet to all beings, and every being is so sweet to

it !"—for the self-effulgent Immortal One, is the bliss in this world. In us also, He is that bliss. He is the *Brahman*. "This air is so sweet to all beings, and all beings are so sweet to this air"—for He who is that self-effulgent immortal Being is the air ; He is also in this body. He is expressing Himself as the life of all beings. "This sun is so sweet to all beings, and all beings are so sweet to this sun," for He who is the self-effulgent Being is the sun, and Him we reflect as smaller lights. What can there be but His reflection ? He is in the body, and it is His reflection which makes us see the light. "This moon is so sweet to all beings, and all beings are so sweet to this moon," for that self-effulgent and immortal One who is the soul of that moon, He is in us expressing himself as mind. "This lightning is so sweet to all beings and all beings are sweet to this lightning,"

for the self-effulgent and immortal One is the soul of this lightning, and is also in us, because all is that *Brahman*. This *Brahman*, this *Âtman*, this Self, is the King of all beings. These ideas are very helpful to men ; they are for meditation. For instance, meditate on the earth, think of the earth, at the same time knowing that we have in us that which is in the earth, that both are the same. Identify the body with the earth, and identify the soul with the Soul behind. Identify the air with the soul that is in the air and that is in you and so on. All these are one, manifested in different forms. To realize this unity is the end and aim of all meditation, and this is what *Yajnavalkya* was trying to explain to *Maitreyi*.

VII

THE HIGHEST IDEAL OF JNÂNA YOGA

As this is the last of these classes it is better that I give a brief *resumé* of all that I have been trying to tell you. In the Vedas and Upanishads we find records of some of the very earliest religious ideas of the Hindus, ideas that long antedated the time of Kapila, ancient as this great sage is. He did not propound the *Sânkhya* philosophy as a new theory of his own. His task was to throw the light of his genius on the vast mass of religious theories that were existing in his time and bring out a rational and coherent system. He succeeded in giving India a psychology that is accepted to the present day by all the diverse and seemingly opposing phil-

osophical systems to be found among the Hindus. His masterly analysis and his comprehensive statement of the processes of the human mind have not yet been surpassed by any later philosopher and he undoubtedly laid the foundation for the Advaita philosophy, which accepted his conclusions as far as they went and then pushed them a step farther, thus reaching a final unity beyond the duality that was the last word of the *Sânkhyas.*

Among all the religious ideas that preceded the time of Kapila,—I mean among recognized religious ideas, and not the very low ones, which do not deserve the name of religion,—we find, even the very first groups include the idea of inspiraton, and a revealed book and so forth. In the earliest stage, the idea of creation is very peculiar ; it is that the whole universe was created out of zero, by the will of God, that in the beginning this universe did not

exist, and out of nothingness all this has come. In the next stage we find this conclusion questioned. The first step in Vedânta asks this question : How can existence be produced out of non-existence ? If this universe is existent it must have come out of something, because it was easy for them of old to see that there is nothing anywhere coming out of nothing, that all work that is being done by human hands requires materials. Naturally, therefore, the ancient Hindus rejected the first idea that this world was created out of nothing, and sought some material out of which this world was created. The whole history of religion, in fact, is the search for this material in our attempts to answer the question : Out of what has all this been produced ? Apart from the question of the efficient cause or God, apart from the question whether God created the universe, the great question of all

questions has been, out of what did God create it ? All the philosophies are turning, as it were, on this question.

One solution is that this material and God and soul are eternal existences, like three parallel lines running eternally side by side, of which nature and soul comprise what they call the dependent, and God the independent Being. Every soul, like every particle of matter, is perfectly dependent on the will of God. These and many other ideas we find already existing when the *Sânkhya* psychology was brought forward by Kapila. According to it, perception comes by the transmission of the suggestion,—which causes irritation of the physical doors of the organs viz. perception first to the eyes etc.,—from the eyes etc. to the organs, from the organs to the mind, from the mind to the *buddhi* and from the *buddhi* to something which is a unit, which they call the *Âtman*. Coming

to modern physiology we know that they have found centres for all the different sensations. First are found the lower centres, then a higher grade of centres, and these two will exactly correspond with the actions of the *buddhi* and the *manas* (mind), but not one centre has been found which controls all the other centres, so philosophy cannot answer what unifies all these centres. Where and how do the centres get unified ? The centres in the brain are all different, and there is not one centre which controls all the others ; therefore, so far as it goes, the *Sânkhya* psychology stands unchallenged upon this point. We must have this unification, something upon which the sensations will be reflected, to form a complete whole. Until there is that something, I cannot have any idea of you, or the picture, or anything else. If we had not that unifying something we would only see, then after a while hear, and

then feel, and while we heard a man talking, we should not see him at all, because all the centres are different.

This body is made of particles which we call matter, and it is dull and insentient. So is what is called the fine body. The fine body, according to the *Sânkhyas* is a little body, made of very fine particles, so fine that no microscope can see them. What is the use of it? It is the receptacle of what we call mind. Just as this gross body is the receptacle of the grosser forces, so the fine body is the receptacle of of the finer forces, that which we call thought with its various modifications. First is the body, which is gross matter, with gross force. Force cannot exist without matter for it can manifest itself only through matter; so the grosser forces work through the body and finally become finer. The very force which is working in a gross form works in a fine form and becomes thought.

There is no real difference between them, simply one is the gross and the other the fine manifestation of the same thing. Neither is there any difference is substance between the fine body and the gross body. The fine body is also material, only very fine material.

Whence do all these forces come? According to the Vedânta philosophy there are two things which form nature, one of which they call *Âkâsa*, which is substance, or matter, infinitely fine, and the other they call *Prâna*. Whatever you see, or feel, or hear, as air or earth, or anything, is material. And everything is a form of this *âkâsa*. It becomes finer and finer, or grosser and grosser, and it changes under the action of *Prâna* (universal Energy). Like *âkâsa prâna* is omnipresent, interpenetrating everything. *Akâsa* is like the water, and everything else in the universe like blocks of ice,

made out of that water and floating in it, and *prâna* is the power that changes the *âkâsa* into all these various forms. This body is the instrument made out of *âkâsa* for the manifestation of *prâna* in gross forms, as muscular motion, or walking, sitting, talking and so on. The fine body also is made of *âkâsa*, a much finer form of *âkâsa*, for the manifestation of the same *prâna* in the finer form of thought. So, first there is this gross body, beyond that is the fine body, and beyond that is the *jiva* (soul), the real man. Just as these finger nails can be pared off a hundred times a year, and yet are still a part of our bodies, not different, so we have not two bodies. It is not that man has a fine and also a gross body ; it is the one body, only it remains longer when it is a fine body, and the grosser it is the sooner it dissolves. Just as I can cut this nail a hundred times a year, so millions of times I can shed

this body is one æon, but the fine body will remain. According to the dualists this *jiva*, or the real man, is very fine, minute.

So far we have seen that man is a being who has first a gross body which dissolves very quickly, then a fine body which remains through æons, and lastly a *jiva*. This *jiva*, according to the Vedânta philosophy, is eternal, just as God is eternal, and *Prakriti* is also eternal, but changefully eternal. The materials of *Prakriti*, the *prâna* and the *âkâsa*, are eternal, but are changing into different forms eternally. Matter and force are eternal, but their combinations vary continually. The *jiva* is not manufactured, either of *âkâsa*, or of *prâna*; it is immaterial, and therefore will remain for ever. It is not the result of any combination of *prâna* and *âkâsa*, and whatever is not the result of combination will never

be destroyed, because destruction is decomposion. That which is not a compound cannot be destroyed. The gross body is a compound of *âkâsa* and *prâna* in various forms and will be decomposed. The fine body will also be decomposed after a long time, but the *jiva* is a simple, and will never be destroyed. For the same reason, we cannot say it ever was born. Nothing simple can be born; only that which is a compound can be born. The whole of this nature combined in these millions of forms is under the will of God. God is all pervading, omnicient, formless, everywhere, and He is directing this nature day and night. The whole of it is under His control. There is no independence of any being. It cannot be. He is the Ruler. This is the teaching of dualistic Vedânta.

Then the question comes, if God be the Ruler of this universe, why did He create such a wicked universe, why must

we suffer so much? The answer is made that it is not God's fault. It is our own fault that we suffer. Whatever we sow that we reap. God does not do anything to punish us. If a man is born poor, or blind, or lame, he did something before he was born in that way, something that produced these results. The *jiva* has been existing for all time, was never created. It has been doing all sorts of things all the time. Whatever we do we suffer for. If we do good we shall have happiness, and if bad, unhappiness. This *jiva* is by its own nature pure, but ignorance covers its nature, says the dualist. As by evil deeds it has covered itself with ignorance, so by good deeds it can become conscious of its own nature again. Just as it is eternal, so its nature is pure. The nature of every being is pure. When through good deeds all its sins and misdeeds have been washed away, then the *jiva* becomes

pure again, and when he becomes pure he goes after death by what is called *Devayana* (the path of the gods), to heaven, or the abode of the gods. If he has been only an oridinarily good man he goes to what is called the "Abode of the Fathers."

When the gross body falls, the organs of speech enter the mind. You cannot think without words; wherever there are words there must be thought. The mind is resolved into the *prâna*, and the *prâna* resolves into the *jiva*. Then the *jiva* leaves the body and goes to that condition of reward or punishment which he has earned by his past life. *Devaloka* is the "place (or abode) of the gods." The word *deva* (god) means bright or shining one, and corresponds to what the Christians and Mohammedans call "angels." According to this teaching there are various heavenly spheres somewhat analogous to the various heavens described by Dante in

the *Divine Comedy.* There are the heaven of the fathers (or *pitris*), *devaloka,* the lunar sphere, the electric sphere and highest of all the *Brahmaloka,* the heaven of *Brahma.* From all the lower heavens the *jiva* returns again to human birth, but he who attains to *Brahmaloka* lives there through all eternity. These are the highest men who have become perfectly unselfish, perfectly purified, who have given up all desires, do not want to do anything except to worship and love God. There is a second class, who do good works, but want some reward, want to go to heaven in return. When they die, their *jiva* goes to the lunar sphere, where it enjoys and becomes a *deva* (god or angel). The gods, the *devas,* are not eternal, they have to die. In heaven they will all die. The only deathless place is *Brahmaloka,* where alone there is no birth and no death. In our mythology it is said there are also

the demons, who sometimes give the gods chase. In all mythologies you read of these fights between the demons, or wicked angels, and the gods and sometimes the demons conquer the gods. In all mythologies also, you find that the *devas* were fond of the beautiful daughters of men. As a *deva*, the *jiva* only reaps results of past actions, but makes no new Karma. Karma means actions that will produce effects, also those effects, or results of action. When a man dies and becomes a *deva* he has a period of pleasure, and during that time makes no fresh Karma; he simply enjoys the reward of his past good works. But when the good Karma is worked out then the other Karma begins to take effect.

In the Vedas there is no mention of hell. But afterwards the *purânas*, the later books in our Scriptures, thought that no religion could become complete without

a proper attachment of hells, and so they invented all sorts of hells, with as many, if not more, varieties of punishment than Dante saw in his *Inferno*, but our books are merciful enough to say that it is only for a period. Bad Karma is worked out in that state and then the souls come back to earth and get another chance. This human form is the great chance. It is called the *karmic* body, in which we decide our fate. We are running in a huge circle, and this is the point in the circle which determines the future. So a human body is considered the greatest body there is; man is greater than the gods. Even they return to human birth. So far with dualistic Vedânta.

Next comes a higher conception of Vedânta philosophy, which says that these ideas are crude. If you say there is a God who is an infinite Being, and a soul which is also infinite, and *Prakriti* which

is also infinite, you can go on multiplying infinites indefinitely, but that is illogical, because each would limit the other and there would be no real infinite. God is both the material and the efficient cause of the universe; He projects this universe out of Himself. Does that mean that God has become these walls, and this table, that God has become the animal, the murderer and all the evils in the world? God is pure, how can He become all these degenerate things? He has not. God is unchangeable, and all these changes are in *Prakriti*,—just as I am a soul and have a body; this body is not different from me in a sense, yet I, the real "I," in fact am not this body. For instance, I am a child, I become a young man, an old man, but my soul has not changed. It remains the same soul. Similarly the whole universe, comprised of *Prakriti*, and and infinite number of souls, is, as it were,

the infinite body of God. He is interpenetrating the whole of it. He alone is unchangeable, but *Prakriti* changes and the souls too change. In what way does *Prakriti* change ? In its forms ; it takes fresh forms. But the souls cannot change that way. They contract and expand in knowledge. Every soul contracts by evil deeds. Those deeds which contract the natural knowledge and purity of the soul are called evil deeds. Those deeds, again, which bring out the natural glory of the soul, are called good deeds. All these souls were pure, but they have become contracted by their own acts. Still, through the mercy of God, and by doing good deeds, they will expand and become pure again. Every soul has the same chance, and, in the long run, must become pure and free itself from *Prakriti*. But this universe will not bease, cecause it is infinite. This is the second theory. The

first is called dualistic Vedânta ; while the second which teaches that there is God, soul, and *Prakriti*, that soul and *Prakriti* form the body of God, and that these three form the unit—is called qualified monistic Vedânta. Believers in this second theory are called qualified non-dualists (*Visishtadvaitins*).

The last and highest theory is pure monism, or as it is known in India, *Advaita*. It also teaches that God must be both the material and the efficient cause of this universe. As such, God has become the whole of this universe. This theory denies that God is the soul, and the universe is the body, and the body is changing. In that case what is the use of calling God the material cause of this universe ? The material cause is the cause become effect ; the effect is nothing but the cause in another form. Wherever you see effect, it is the cause reproduced. If the universe is

the effect, and God the cause, this must be the reproduction of God. If it be claimed that the universe is the body of God and that that body becomes contracted and fine and becomes the cause, and out of that the universe is evolved, then the *advaitist* says it is God Himself who has become this universe. Now comes a very fine question. If God has become this universe, then everything is God. Certainly; everything is God. My body is God, and my mind is God, and my soul is God. Then why are there so many *jivas*? Has God become divided into millions and millions of *jivas*? How can that infinite power and substance, the one Being of the universe become divided? It is impossible to divide infinity. How can the pure Being become this universe? If He has become the universe, He is changeful, and if He is changeful, He is in *Prakriti*, and whatever is in *Prakriti* is born and dies. If

God is changeful, He must die some day. Remember that. Again, how much of God has become this universe ? If you say "X," the algebraical unknown quantity, then God is God minus "X" now, and therefore not the same God as before this creation, because so much of Him has become this universe. The answer of the monist is that this universe has no real existence, it exists in appearance only. These *devas* and gods and angels and being born and dying, and all these infinite number of souls coming up and going down, all these things are mere dreams. All is the one Infinite. The one sun reflected on various drops of water appears to be many. Millions of globules of water reflect so many millions of suns and in each globule there is a perfect image of the sun, yet there is only sun, one—so it is with all these *jivas*, they are but reflections of the one infinite Being. A dream can-

not be without a reality, and that reality is the one infinite Existence. You, as body, mind, or soul, are a dream, but what you really are is Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute. Thus says the *Advaitist*. All these births and rebirths, this coming and going are but parts of the dream. You are infinite. Where can you go? The sun, moon, and the whole universe are but a drop in your nature. How can you be born or die? The Self was never born, never will be born, never had father or mother, friends or foes, for it is Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute.

What is the goal, according to this philosophy? To receive this knowledge and become one with the universe. For them who attain to this, all heavens, even *Brahmaloka*, are destroyed, the whole dream vanishes, and they find themselves the eternal God of the universe. They attain their real individuality, infinitely beyond

these little selves which we now think of so much importance. No individuality will be lost; an infinite and eternal Individuality will be realized. Pleasure in little things will cease. We are finding pleasure in this little body, in this little individuality but how much greater the pleasure will be when this whole universe appears as our own body? If there be pleasure in these separate bodies, how much more when all bodies are one? The man who has realized this has attained to freedom, has gone beyond the dream and known himself in his real nature. This is the teaching of Advaita, the non-dualistic Vedânta.

These are the three steps which Vedânta philosophy has taken, and we cannot go beyond, because we cannot go beyond unity. When any science reaches a unity it cannot possibly go any farther. You cannot go beyond the idea of the

Absolute, the idea of the One, out of which everything in the universe, has evolved. All people cannot take up this *Advaita* philosophy ; it is too hard. First of all, it is very difficult to understand it intellectually. It requires the sharpest of intellects, a bold understanding. Secondly, it does not suit the vast majority of people.

It is better to begin with the first of these three steps. Then by thinking of that and understanding it, the second one will open of itself. Just as a race travels, so individuals have to travel. The steps which the human race has taken to come to the highest pinnacle of religious thought, every individual will have to take. Only, while the human race took millions of years to reach from one step to another, individuals may live the whole life of the human race in a few years, or they may be able to do it more quickly, perhaps in six

months. But each one of us will have to go through these steps. Those of you who are non-dualists can, no doubt, look back to the period of your lives when you were strong dualists. As soon as you think you are a body and a mind, you will have to accept the whole of this dream. If you have one piece you must take the whole. The man who says, here is this world but there is no God, is a fool, because if there be a world there will have to be a cause of the world, and that is what is called God. You cannot have an effect without knowing that there is a cause. God will only vanish when this world vanishes. When you have realized your one-ness with God, this world will no longer be for you. As long as this dream exists, however, we are bound to look upon ourselves as being born and dying, but as soon as the dream that we are bodies vanishes, so will vanish this dream that we are being

born and dying, and so will vanish the other dream that there is a universe. That very thing which we now see as this universe will appear to us as God, and that very God who was so long external, will appear as the very Self of our own selves. The last word of *Advaita* is, *Tat tvam asi*,—"That thou art."

A STUDY

OF

RELIGION

BY THE

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.



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Swami Vivekananda.

A STUDY OF RELIGION.



WHAT IS RELIGION.

A huge locomotive has rushed on over the line and a small worm that was creeping upon one of the rails saved its life by crawling out of the path of the locomotive. Yet this little worm so insignificant that it can be crushed in a moment is a living something, while this locomotive, so huge, so immense, is only an engine, a machine. You say the one has life and the other is only dead matter and all its power and strength and speed are only those of a dead machine, a mechanical contrivance. Yet the poor little worm which moved upon the rail and which the least touch of the engine would have deprived of its life, is a majestic being compared to that huge locomotive. It is a small part of the Infinite and therefore it is greater than this powerful engine. Why should that be so? How do we know the living from the dead? The

machine mechanically performs all the movements its maker made it to perform, its movements are not those of life. How can we make the distinction between the living and the dead, then? In the living there is freedom, there is intelligence; in the dead all is bound and no freedom is possible because their is no intelligence. This freedom that distinguishes us from mere machines is what we are all striving for. To be more free is the goal of all our efforts, for only in perfect freedom can there be perfection. This effort to attain freedom underlies all forms of worship, whether we know it or not.

If we were to examine the various sorts of worship all over the world, we would see that the rudest of mankind are worshipping ghosts, demons and the spirits of their forefathers. Serpent worship, worship of tribal gods and worship of the departed ones, why do they do this? Because they feel that in some unknown way these beings are greater, more powerful than themselves, and limit their freedom. They

therefore seek to propitiate these beings in order to prevent them from molesting them, in other words, to get more freedom. They also seek to win favor from these superior beings, to get by gift of the gods what ought to be earned by personal effort.

On the whole, this shows that the world is expecting a miracle. This expectation never leaves us, and however we may try, we are all running after the miraculous and extraordinary. What is mind but that ceaseless inquiry into the meaning and mystery of life? We may say that only uncultivated people are going after all these things, but the question still is there, why should it be so? The Jews were asking for a miracle. The whole world has been asking for the same these thousands of years. There is again the universal dissatisfaction; we make an ideal but we have rushed only half the way after it, when we make a newer one. We struggle hard to attain to some goal and then discover we do not want it. This dissatisfaction we are having

time after time, and what is there in the mind if there is to be only dissatisfaction? What is the meaning of this universal dissatisfaction? It is because freedom is ever man's goal. He seeks it ever, his whole life is a struggle after it. The child rebels against law as soon as it is born. Its first utterance is a cry, a protest against the bondage in which it finds itself. This longing for freedom produces the idea of a Being who is absolutely free. The concept of God is a fundamental element in the human constitution. In the Vedanta, *Sat-chit-ananda* (Existence-Knowledge-Bliss) is the highest concept of God possible to the mind. It is the essence of knowledge and is by its nature the essence of bliss. We have been stifling that inner voice long enough, seeking to follow law and quiet the human nature, but there is that human instinct to rebel against Nature's laws. We may not understand what the meaning is, but there is that unconscious struggle of the human with the spiritual, of the lower with the

higher mind, and the struggle attempts to preserve one's separate life, what we call our 'individuality.'

Even hells stand out with this miraculous fact that we are born rebels and the first fact of life, the inrushing of life itself,—against this we rebel and cry out, "No law for us." As long as we obey the laws we are like machines and on goes the universe and we cannot break it. Laws as laws become man's nature. The first inkling of life on its higher level is in seeing this struggle within us to break the bond of Nature and to be free. "Freedom, Oh Freedom! Freedom, Oh Freedom!" is the song of the soul. Bondage, alas, to be bound in Nature seems its fate.

Why should there be serpent, or ghost, or demon worship and all these various creeds and forms for gaining miracles? Why do we say that there is life, there is being in any thing? There must be a meaning in all this search, this endeavour to understand life, to explain

being. It is not meaningless and vain. It is man's ceaseless endeavour to become free. The knowledge which we now call science has been struggling, for thousands of years in its attempt to gain freedom, and people ask for freedom. Yet there is no freedom in Nature. It is all law. Still the struggle goes on. Nay, the whole of Nature from the very sun to the atoms is under law, and even for man there is no freedom. But we cannot believe it. We have been studying laws from the beginning and yet cannot,—nay will not, believe that man is under law. The soul cries ever, "Freedom, Oh Freedom!" With the conception of God as a perfectly free Being, man cannot rest eternally in this bondage. Higher he must go and unless the struggle were for himself, he would think it too severe. Man says to himself, "I am a born slave, I am bound; nevertheless there is a Being who is not bound by Nature. He is free and Master of Nature." The conception of God, therefore, is as essential and as

fundamental a part of mind as is the idea of bondage. Both are the outcome of the idea of Freedom. There cannot be life, even in the plant, without the idea of freedom. In the plant or in the worm, life has to rise to the individual concept. It is there, unconsciously working, the plant living its life to preserve the variety, principle, or form, not Nature. The idea of Nature controlling every step onward overrules the idea of freedom. Onward goes the idea of the material world, onward moves the idea of freedom. Still the fight goes on. We are hearing about all the quarrels of creeds and sects, yet creeds and sects are just and proper, they must be there. The chain is lengthening and naturally the struggle increases, but there need be no quarrels if we only knew, that we are all striving to reach the same goal.

The embodiment of freedom, the Master of Nature, is what we call God. You cannot deny Him. No, because you cannot remove or live without the idea of freedom. Would you come

here if you did not believe you were free? It is quite possible that the biologist can and will give some explanation of this perpetual effort to be free. Take all that for granted, still the idea of freedom is there. It is a fact, as much so as the other fact that you cannot apparently get over, the fact of being under Nature.

Bondage and liberty, light and shadow, good and evil must be there, but every fact of the bondage shows also this freedom hidden there. If one is a fact, the other is equally a fact. There must be this idea of freedom. While now we cannot see that this idea of bondage in uncultivated man, is his struggle for freedom, yet the idea of freedom is there. The bondage of sin and impurity in the uncultivated savage is to his consciousness very small, for his nature is only a little higher than the animal. What he struggles against is the bondage of physical nature, the lack of physical gratification, but out of this lower consciousness grows and broadens the higher conception of a mental

or moral bondage and a longing for spiritual freedom. Here we see the divine dimly shining through the veil of ignorance. The veil is very dense at first and the light may be almost obscured, but it is there, ever pure and undimmed—the radiant fire of freedom and perfection. Man personifies this as the Ruler of the Universe, the One Free Being. He does not yet know that the universe is all one, that the difference is only in degree, in the concept.

The whole of Nature is worship of God. Wherever there is life, there is this search for freedom and that freedom is the same as God. Necessarily this freedom gives us mastery over all Nature and is impossible without knowledge. The more we are knowing, the more we are becoming masters of Nature. Mastery alone is making us strong and if there be some being entirely free and master of Nature, that being must have a perfect knowledge of Nature, must be omnipresent and omniscient. Freedom must go hand in hand with these, and that being

alone who has acquired these will be beyond Nature.

Blessedness, eternal peace arising from perfect freedom, is the highest concept of religion, underlying all the ideas of God in Vedanta,—absolutely free Existence, not bound by anything, no change, no Nature, nothing that can produce a change in Him. This same freedom is in you and in me and is the only real freedom.

God is still established upon His own majestic changeless Self. You and I try to be one with Him, but plant ourselves upon Nature, upon the trifles of daily life, on money, on fame, on human love and all these changing forms in Nature which make for bondage. When Nature shines, upon what depends the shining? Upon God and not upon the sun nor the moon nor the stars.

Wherever anything shines, whether the light in the sun or in our own consciousness, it is He. He shining, all shines after Him.

Now we have seen that this God is self-evident, impersonal, omniscient, the Knower and Master of Nature, the Lord of all. He is behind all worship and it is being done according to Him whether we know it or not. I go one step further. That at which all marvel, that which we call evil is His worship too. This too is a part of freedom. Nay, I will be terrible even, and tell you that when you are doing evil the impulse behind is also that freedom. It may have been misguided and misled but it was there, and there cannot be any life or any impulse unless that freedom be behind it. Freedom breathes in the throb of the universe. Unless there is unity at the universal heart we cannot understand variety. Such is the conception of the Lord in the Upanishads. Sometimes it rises even higher, presenting to us an ideal before which at first we stand aghast,—that we are in essence one with God. He who is the coloring in the wings of the butterfly, and the blossoming of the rose-bud,

is the power that is in the plant and in the butterfly. He who gives us life is the power within us. Out of His fire comes life and the direst death is also His power. He whose shadow is death, His shadow is immortality also. Take a still higher conception; see how we are flying like hunted hares from all that is terrible, and like them hiding our heads and thinking we are safe. See how the whole world is flying from everything terrible. Once when I was in Benares, I was passing through a place where there was a large tank of water on one side and a high wall on the other. It was in the grounds where there were many monkeys. The monkeys of Benares are huge brutes and are sometimes surly. They now took it into their heads not to allow me to pass through their street, so they howled and shrieked and clutched at my feet as I passed. As they pressed closer, I began to run, but the faster I ran, the faster came the monkeys and they began to bite at me. It seemed impossible to

escape, but just then I met a stranger who called out to me, "Face the brutes." I turned and faced the monkeys and they fell back and finally fled. That is a lesson for all life,—face the terrible, face it boldly. Like the monkeys, the hardships of life fall back when we cease to flee before them. If we are ever to gain freedom, it must be by conquering Nature, never by running away. Cowards never win victories We have to fight fear and troubles and ignorance, if we expect them to flee before us.

What is death? What are terrors? Do not you see the Lord's face in them? Fly from evil and terror and misery and they will follow you. Face them and they will flee. The whole world worships ease and pleasure and very few dare to worship that which is painful. To rise above both is the idea of freedom. Unless man passes through this gate he cannot be free. We all have to face these. We strive to worship the Lord, but the body

rises between, Nature rises between Him and us and blinds our vision. We must learn how to worship and love Him in the thunderbolt, in shame, in sorrow, in sin. All the world has ever been preaching the God of virtue. I preach a God of virtue, and a God of sin in one. Take him if you dare,—that is the one way to salvation; then alone will come to us the Truth Ultimate which comes from the idea of oneness. Then will be lost the idea that one is greater than another. The nearer we approach the law of freedom, the more we shall come under the Lord, and troubles will vanish. Then we shall not differentiate the door of hell from the gate of heaven, nor differentiate between men and say, "I am greater than any being in the universe." Until we see nothing in the world but the Lord, the Lord Himself, all these evils will beset us and we shall make all these distinctions; because it is only in the Lord, in the Spirit that we are all one, and until we

see God everywhere, this unity will not exist for us.

Two birds of beautiful plumage, inseparable companions, sat upon the same tree, one on the top and one below. The beautiful bird below was eating the fruits of the tree, sweet and bitter, one moment a sweet one and another a bitter. The moment he ate a bitter fruit, he was sorry, but after a while he ate another and when it too was bitter, he looked up and saw the other bird who ate neither the sweet nor the bitter, but was calm and majestic, immersed in his own glory. And then the poor lower bird forgot and went on eating the sweet and bitter fruits again, until at last he ate one that was extremely bitter, and then he stopped again and once more looked up at the glorious bird above. Then he came nearer and nearer to the other bird and when he had come near enough, rays of light shone upon him and enveloped him and he saw he was transformed into the higher bird. He became calm,

majestic, free and found that there had been but one bird all the time on the tree. The lower bird was but the reflection of the one above. So we are in reality one with the Lord, but the reflection makes us seem many, as when the one sun reflects in a million dew-drops and seems a million tiny suns. The reflection must vanish if we are to identify ourselves with our real nature which is divine. The universe itself can never be the limit of our satisfaction. That is why the miser gathers more and more money, that is why the robber robs, the sinner sins, that is why you are learning philosophy. All have one purpose. There is no other purpose in life, save to reach this freedom. Consciously or unconsciously, we are all striving for perfection. Every being must attain to it.

The man who is groping through sin, through misery, the man who is choosing the path through hells will reach it, but it will take time. We cannot save him. Some hard knocks on his head will help him to turn to the

Lord. The path of virtue, purity, unselfishness, spirituality, becomes known at last and what all are doing unconsciously, we are trying to do consciously. The idea is expressed by St. Paul, "The God that ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you." This is the lesson for the whole world to learn. What have these philosophies and theories of Nature to do, if not to help us to attain to this one goal in life? Let us come to that consciousness of the identity of everything and let man see himself in everything. Let us be no more the worshippers of creeds or sects with small limited notions of God, but see Him in everything in the universe. It you are knowers of God, you will everywhere find the same worship as in your own heart.

Get rid, in the first place, of all these limited ideas and see God in every person,—working through all hands, walking through all feet, and eating through every mouth. In every being He lives, through all minds He

thinks, He is self-evident, nearer unto us than ourselves. To know this is religion, is faith, and may it please the Lord to give us this faith. When we shall feel that oneness we shall be immortal. We *are* physically immortal even, one with the universe. So long as there is one that breathes throughout the universe. I live in that one. I am not this limited little being, I am the universal. I am the life of all the sons of the past. I am the soul of Buddha, of Jesus, of Mahomet. I am the soul of all the teachers, and I am all the robbers that robbed, and all the murderers that were hanged, I am the universal. Stand up then; this is the highest worship. You are one with the universe. That only is humility, not crawling upon all fours and calling yourself a sinner. That is the highest evolution when this veil of differentiation is torn off. The highest creed is Oneness. I am so-and-so is a limited idea, not true of the real "I." I am the universal, stand upon that and ever worship the Highest

through the highest form, for God is Spirit and should be worshipped in spirit and in truth. Through lower forms of worship, man's material thoughts rise to spiritual worship and the Universal Infinite One is at last worshipped in and through the spirit. That which is limited is material. The spirit alone is Infinite. God is spirit, is Infinite, man is spirit and therefore Infinite, and the Infinite alone can worship the Infinite. We will worship the Infinite; that is the highest spiritual worship. The grandeur of realizing these ideas, how difficult it is: I theorize, talk, philosophize, and the next moment something comes against me and I unconsciously become angry; I forget there is anything in the universe but this little limited self; I forget to say, "I am the Spirit, what is this trifle to me? I am the Spirit." I forget it is all myself playing, I forget God, I forget freedom.

Sharp as the blade of a razor, long and difficult and hard to cross, is the way to freedom.

The sages have declared this again and again. Yet do not let these weaknesses and failures bind you. The Upanishads have declared: "Arise! Awake! and stop not until the goal is reached." We will then certainly cross the path, sharp as it is like the razor, and long and distant and difficult though it be. Man becomes the master of gods and demons. No one is to blame for our miseries but ourselves. Do you think there is only a dark cup of poison if man goes to look for nectar? The nectar is there and is for every man who strives to reach it. The Lord Himself tells us. "Give up all these paths and struggles. Do thou take refuge in me. I will take thee to the other shore, be not afraid." We heard that from all the Scriptures of the world that come to us. The same voice teaches us to say, "Thy will be done upon earth, as it is in Heaven,"—for, "Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory." It is difficult, all very difficult. I say to myself: "This moment I will take refuge in Thee,

O Lord, unto Thy love I will sacrifice all, and on Thine alter I will place all that is good and virtuous. My sins, my sorrows, my actions, good and evil, I will offer unto Thee; do Thou take them and I will never forget." One moment I say, "Thy will be done," and the next moment something comes to try me and I spring up in a rage. The goal of all religions is the same but the language of the teachers differs. The attempt is to kill the false "I," so that the real "I," the Lord, will reign. "I" the Lord, am a jealous God, thou shalt have no other God but me," say the Hebrew Scriptures. God must be there all alone. We must say, "Not I, but Thou," and then we should give up everything but the Lord. He and He alone, should reign. Perhaps we struggle hard and yet the next moment our feet slip, and then we try to stretch out our hands to Mother. We find we cannot stand alone. Life is Infinite, one chapter of which is, "Thy will be done," and unless we realize all the chapters we cannot

realize the whole. "Thy will be done,"—every moment the traitor mind rebels against it, yet it must be said, again and again if we are to conquer the lower self. We cannot serve a traitor and yet be saved. There is salvation for all except the traitor and we stand condemned as traitors, traitors against our own selves, against the majesty of Mother when we refuse to obey the voice of our higher Self. Come what will, we must give our bodies and minds up to the Supreme Will. Well has it been said by the Hindu philosopher, "If man says twice, 'Thy will be done,' he commits sin." "Thy will be done," what more is needed, why say it twice? What is good is good. No more shall we take it back. "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven, for Thine is the Kingdom and the power and the glory for evermore."

THE NECESSITY OF RELIGION.

(Delivered in London.)

Of all the forces that have worked and are still working, to mould the destinies of the human race, none, certainly, is more potent than that, the manifestation of which, we call religion. All social organisations have as a background, somewhere, the workings of that peculiar force, and the greatest cohesive impulse ever brought into play amongst human units has been derived from this power. It is obvious to all of us, that in very many cases the bonds of religion have proved stronger than the bonds of race, or climate, or even of descent. It is a well-known fact that persons worshipping the same God, believing in the same religion, have stood by each other, with much greater strength and constancy, than people of merely the same descent, or even than brothers. Various attempts have been made to trace the beginnings of religion. In all the ancient

religions which have come down to us at the present day, we find one claim made—that they are all supernatural; that their genesis is not, as it were, in the human brain, but that they have originated somewhere outside of it.

Two theories have gained some acceptance amongst modern scholars. One is the spirit theory of religion, the other the evolution of the Infinite. One party maintains that ancestor worship is the beginning of religious ideas; the other that, religion originates in the personification of the powers of nature. Man want to keep up the memory of his dead relatives, and thinks they are living even when the body is dissolved, and he wants to place food for them and, in a certain sense, to worship them. Out of that, came the growth we call religion. Studying the ancient religions of the Egyptians, Babylonians, Chinese, and many other races in America and elsewhere, we find very clear traces of this ancestor worship being the beginning of religion. With the ancient Egyptians, the first idea of

the soul was that of a double. Every human body contained in it another being very similar to it, and when a man died this double went out of the body and yet lived on. But the life of the double lasted only so long as the dead body remained intact, and that is why we find among the Egyptians so much solicitude to keep the body uninjured. And that is why they built those huge pyramids in which they preserved the bodies. For, if any portion of the external body was hurt, the double would be correspondingly injured. This is clearly, ancestor worship. With the ancient Babylonians we find the same idea of the double, but with a variation. The double lost all sense of love; it frightened the living to give it food and drink, and to help it in various ways. It even lost all affection for its own children and its own wife. Among the ancient Hindus, also we find traces of this ancestor worship. Among the Chinese, the basis of their religion may also be said to be ancestor

orship, and it still permeates the length and breadth of that vast country. In fact, the only religion that can really be said to flourish in China is that of ancestor worship. Thus it seems, on the one hand, a very good position is made out for those, who hold the theory of ancestor worship as the beginning of religion.

On the other hand, there are scholars who from the ancient Aryan literature show that religion originated in nature worship. Although in India we find proofs of ancestor worship everywhere, yet in the oldest records there is no trace of it whatsoever. In the Rig Veda Samhita, the most ancient record of the Aryan race, we do not find any trace of it. Modern scholars think it is the worship of nature that they find there. The human mind seems to struggle to get a peep behind the scenes. The dawn, the evening, the hurricane, the stupendous and gigantic forces of nature, its beauties, these have exercised the human mind, and it aspires to go beyond, to understand something

about them. In the struggle they endow these phenomena with personal attributes, giving them souls and bodies, sometimes beautiful, sometimes transcendent. Every attempt ends by these phenomena becoming abstractions whether personalised or not. So also it is found with the ancient Greeks; their whole mythology is simply this abstracted nature worship. So also with the ancient Germans, the Scandinavians, and all the other Aryan races. Thus, on this side too, a very strong case has been made out, that religion has its origin in the personification of the powers of nature.

These two views, though they seem to be contradictory, can be reconciled on a third basis, which to my mind is the real germ of religion, and that I propose to call the struggle to transcend the limitations of the senses. Either, man goes to seek for the spirits of his ancestors, or the spirits of the dead, or he wants to get a glimpse of what there is after

the body is dissolved, or he desires to understand the power working behind the stupendous phenomena of nature. Whichever of these is the case, one thing is certain, that he tries to transcend the limitations of the senses. He cannot remain satisfied with his senses; he wants to go beyond them. The explanation need not be mysterious. To me, it seems very natural that the first glimpse of religion should come through dreams. The first idea of immortality, man may well get through dreams. Is that not a most wonderful state? And we know that children and untutored minds find very little difference between dreaming and their awakened state. What can be more natural than that they find, as natural logic, that even during the sleep state, when the body is apparently dead, the mind goes on with all its intricate workings? What wonder that men will at once come to the conclusion that when this body is dissolved for ever, the same working will go on? This, to my mind, would

be a more natural explanation of the supernatural, and through this dream idea the human mind rises to higher and higher conceptions. Of course, in time, the vast majority of mankind found out that these dreams are not verified by their waking states, and that during the dream state it is not that man has a fresh existence, but simply that he recapitulates the experiences of the awakened state.

But by this time the search had begun, and the search was inward, and they continued inquiring more deeply into the different stages of the mind, and discovered higher states than either the waking or the dreaming. This state of things we find in all the organised religions of the world, called either ecstacy, or inspiration. In all organised religions, their founders, prophets and messengers, are declared to have gone into states of mind, that were neither waking nor sleeping, in which they came face to face with a new series of facts, relating to what is called the spiritual kingdom. They

realised things there, much more intensely than we realise facts around us in our waking state. Take, for instance, the religions of the Brahmanas. The Vedas are said to be written by Rishis. These Rishis were sages who realised certain facts. The exact definition of the Sanskrit word Rishi is, a Seer of Mantrams,—of the thoughts, conveyed in the Vedic Hymns. These men declared that they had realised—sensed, if that word can be used with regard to the supersensuous—certain facts, and these facts they proceeded to put on record. We find the same truth declared amongst both the Jews and the Christians.

Some exception may be taken in the case of the Buddhists as represented by the Southern sect. It may be asked—if the Buddhists do not believe in any God, or soul, how can their religion be derived from this supersensuous state of existence? The answer to this is, that even the Buddhists find an eternal moral law, and that moral law was not reasoned out in our

sense of the word, but Buddha found it, discovered it, in a supersensuous state. Those of you who have studied the life of Buddha, even as shortly given in that beautiful poem, "The Light of Asia," may remember that Buddha is represented as sitting under the Bo-tree until he reached that supersensuous state of mind. All his teachings came through this, and not through intellectual cogitations.

Thus, a tremendous statement is made by all religions, that the human mind, at certain moments, transcends not only the limitations of the senses, but also the power of reasoning. It then comes face to face with facts, which it could never have sensed, could never have reasoned out. These facts are the basis of all the religions of the world. Of course we have the right to challenge these facts, to put them to the test of reason, nevertheless, all the existing religions of the world claim for the human mind this peculiar power of transcending the limits of the senses, and the limits of

reason; and this power they put forward as a statement of fact.

Apart from the consideration of the question how far these facts claimed by religions are true, we find one characteristic common to them all. They are all abstractions as contrasted with the concrete discoveries of physics, for instance; and in all the highly organised religions they take the purest form of Unit Abstraction, either in the form of an Abstracted Presence, as an Omnipresent Being, as an Abstract Personality called God, as a Moral Law, or, in the form of an Abstract Essence underlying every existence. In modern times too, the attempts made to preach religions without appealing to the supersensuous state of the mind, have had to take up the old abstractions of the Ancients, and give different names to them, as "Moral Law," the "Ideal Unity," and so forth, thus showing that these abstractions are not in the senses. None of us have yet seen an Ideal Human Being, and yet we are

told to believe in it. None of us have yet seen an ideally perfect man, and yet without that ideal we cannot progress. Thus, this one fact stands out from all these different religions, that there is an Ideal Unit Abstraction, which is put before us, either in the form of a Person, or an Impersonal Being, or a Law, or a Presence, or an Essence. We are always struggling to raise ourselves up to that ideal. Every human being whosoever and wheresoever he may be, has an ideal of infinite power. Every human being has an ideal of infinite pleasure. Most of the works that we find around us, the activities displayed everywhere, are due to the struggle for this infinite power, or this infinite pleasure. But a few quickly discover that although they are struggling for infinite power, it is not through the senses that it can be reached. They find out very soon that that infinite pleasure is not to be got through the senses, or, in other words, the senses are too limited, and the body is too limited to express the Infinite. To manifest the

Infinite through the finite is impossible, and, sooner or later, man learns to give up the attempt to express the Infinite through the finite. This giving up, this renunciation of the attempt, is the background of ethics. Renunciation is the very basis upon which ethics stands. There never was an ethical code preached which had not renunciation for its basis.

Ethics always says: "Not I, but thou." Its motto is, "Not self, but non-self." The vain ideas of individualism to which man clings when he is trying to find that Infinite Power, or that Infinite Pleasure through the senses, have to be given up, say the laws of ethics. You have to put *yourself* last, and *others* before you. The senses say, "Myself first." Ethics says, "I must hold myself last." Thus, all codes of ethics are based upon this renunciation; destruction, not construction, of the individual on the material plane. That Infinite will never find expression upon the material plane, nor is it possible or thinkable.

So, man has to give up the plane of matter, and rise to other spheres to seek a deeper expression of that Infinite. In this way the various ethical laws are being moulded, but all have that one central idea, eternal self-abnegation. Perfect self-annihilation is the ideal of ethics. People are startled if they are asked not to think of their individualities. They seem so very much afraid of losing what they call their individuality. At the same time, the same men would declare the highest ideals of ethics to be right, never for a moment thinking that the scope, the goal, the idea of all ethics is the destruction, and not the building up, of the individual.

Utilitarian standards cannot explain the ethical relations of men, for, in the first place we cannot derive any ethical laws from considerations of utility. Without the supernatural sanction, as it is called, or the perception of the super-conscious, as I prefer to term it, there can be no ethics. Without the struggle towards

the Infinite, there can be no ideal. Any system that wants to bind men down to the limits of their own societies are not able to find an explanation for the ethical laws of mankind. The Utilitarian wants us to give up the struggle after the Infinite, the reaching for the Supersensuous, as impracticable and absurd, and, in the same breath, asks us to take up ethics, and do good to society. Why should we do good? Doing good is a secondary consideration. We must have an ideal. Ethics itself is not the end, but the means to the end. If the end is not there, why should we be ethical? Why should I do good to other men, and not injure them? If happiness is the goal of mankind, why should I not make myself happy, and others unhappy? What prevents me? In the second place the basis of Utility is too narrow. All the current social forms and methods are derived from society as it exists, but what right has the Utilitarian to assume that society is eternal? Society did not exist ages ago, possibly will not

exist ages hence. Most probably it is one of the passing stages through which we are going towards a higher evolution, and any law that is derived from society alone cannot be eternal, cannot cover the whole ground of man's nature. At best, therefore, Utilitarian theories can only work under present social conditions. Beyond that, they have no value. But a morality, and ethical code derived from religion and spirituality, has the whole of infinite man for its scope. It takes up the individual, but its relations are to the Infinite, and it takes up society also—because society is nothing but numbers of these individuals grouped together, and as it applies to the individual and *his* eternal relations, it must necessarily apply to the whole of society, in whatever condition it may be at any given time. Thus we see that there is always the necessity of spiritual religion for mankind. Man cannot always think of matter, however pleasurable it may be.

It has been said that too much attention to things spiritual disturbs our practical relations in this world. As far back as in the days of the Chinese sage Confucius, it was said: "Let us take care of this world, and then, when we have finished with this world, we will take care of other worlds." It is all very well that we should *take care* of this world. But if too much attention to the spiritual may affect a little our practical relations, too much attention to the so-called practical, hurts us here and hereafter. It makes us materialistic. For man is not to regard *nature* as his goal, but something higher.

Man is man, so long as he is struggling to rise above nature, and this nature is both internal and external. Not only does it comprise the laws that govern the particles of matter outside us and in our bodies, but also the more subtle nature within, which is, in fact, the motive power governing the external. It is good and very grand to conquer external nature,

but grander still to conquer our internal nature. It is grand and good to know the laws that govern the stars and planets; it is infinitely grander and better to know the laws that govern the passions, the feelings, the will, of mankind. This conquering of the inner man, understanding the secrets of the subtle workings that are within the human mind, and knowing its wonderful secrets, belong entirely to religion. Human nature—the ordinary human nature, I mean—wants to see big material facts. The ordinary man cannot understand anything that is subtle. Well has it been said, that the masses admire the lion, that kills a thousand lambs, never for a moment thinking that it is death to the lambs, although a momentary triumph for the lion; because they find pleasure only in manifestations of physical strength. Thus it is, with the ordinary run of mankind. They understand and find pleasure in everything that is external. But in every society there is a section, whose pleasures are not in

the senses, but beyond, and who now and then catch glimpses of something higher than matter, and struggle to reach it. And if we read the history of nations between the lines, we shall always find that the rise of a nation comes with an increase in the number of such men, and the fall begins, when this pursuit after the Infinite, however vain, Utilitarians may call it, has ceased. That is to say, the mainspring of the strength of every race lies in its spirituality, and the death of that race begins the day that spirituality wanes and materialism gains ground.

Thus, apart from the solid facts and truths that we may learn from religion, apart from the comforts that we may gain from it, religion, as a science, as a study, is the greatest and healthiest exercise that the human mind can have. This pursuit of the Infinite, this struggle to grasp the Infinite, this effort to get beyond the limitations of the senses, out of matter, as it were, and to evolve the spiritual man—this striving day and night to make the Infinite one

with our being—this struggle itself, is the grandest and most glorious that man can make. Some persons find the greatest pleasure in eating. We have no right to say, that they should not. Others find the greatest pleasure in possessing certain things. We have no right to say, they should not. But they also have no right to say, "no," to the man, who finds his highest pleasure in spiritual thought. The lower the organisation, the greater the pleasure in the senses. Very few men can eat a meal with the same gusto as a dog, or a wolf. But all the pleasures of the dog or the wolf have gone, as it were, into the senses. The lower types of humanity in all nations, find pleasure in the senses, while the cultured and the educated, find it in thought, in philosophy, in the arts and sciences. Spirituality is a still higher plane. The subject being infinite, that plane is the highest, and the pleasure there, is the highest for those who can appreciate it. So, even on the utilitarian ground that man is to seek for

pleasure, he should cultivate religious thought, for it is the highest pleasure that exists. Thus religion, as a study, seems to me to be absolutely necessary. We can see it in its effects. It is the greatest motive power that moves the human mind. No other ideal can put into us the same mass of energy as the spiritual. So far as human history goes, it is obvious to all of us, that this has been the case, and that its powers are not dead. I do not deny that men on simply utilitarian grounds, can be very good and moral. There have been many great men in this world perfectly sound moral and good, simply on utilitarian grounds. But the world-movers, men who bring, as it were, a mass of magnetism into the world, whose spirit works in hundreds and in thousands, whose life ignites others with a spiritual fire,—such men we always find have that spiritual background. Their motive power came from religion. Religion is the greatest motive power for realising that infinite energy, which is the birthright and nature

of every man. In building up character, in making for everything that is good and great, in bringing peace to others, and peace to one's own self, religion is the highest motive power, and therefore, ought to be studied from that standpoint. Religion must be studied on a broader basis than formerly. All narrow, limited, fighting ideas of religion, have to go. All sect ideas and tribal or national ideas of religion must be given up. That each tribe or nation, should have its own particular God, and think that every other is wrong, is a superstition that should belong to the past. All such ideas must be abandoned.

As the human mind broadens, its spiritual steps broaden too. The time has already come, when a man cannot record a thought, without its reaching to all corners of the earth; by merely physical means, we have come into touch with the whole world; so the future religions of the world have to become as universal, as wide.

The religious ideals of the future, must embrace all that exists in the world that is good and great, and, at the same time, have infinite scope for future development. All that was good in the past must be preserved; and the doors must be kept open for future additions to the already existing store. Religions must also be inclusive, and not look down with contempt upon one another, because their particular ideals of God are different. In my life, I have seen a great many spiritual men, a great many sensible persons, who did not believe in God, at all, that is to say, not in our sense of the word. Perhaps, they understood God better than we can ever do. The Personal idea of God or the Impersonal, the Infinite, Moral Law, or the Ideal Man—these all have to come under the definition of religion. And when religions have become thus broadened, their power for good will have increased a hundred-fold. Religions, having tremendous power in them, have often done more injury to the world than

good, simply on account of their narrowness, and limitations.

Even at the present time we find many sects and societies, with almost the same ideas, fighting each other, because one does not want to set forth those ideas in precisely the same way as another. Therefore, religions will have to broaden. Religious ideas will have to become universal, vast and infinite, and then alone, we shall have the fullest play of religion, for the power of religion has only just begun to manifest in the world. It is sometimes said that religions are dying out, that spiritual ideas are dying out of the world. To me it seems that they have just begun to grow. The power of religion, broadened and purified, is going to penetrate every part of human life. So long as religion was in the hands of a chosen few, or of a body of priests, it was in temples, churches, books, dogmas, ceremonials, forms and rituals. But when we come to the real, spiritual, universal concept, then, and then alone, religion will

become real and living; it will come into our very nature, live in our every movement, penetrate every pore of our society, and be infinitely more a power for good, than it has ever been before.

What is needed, is a fellow-feeling between the different types of religion, seeing that they all stand or fall together; a fellow-feeling which springs from mutual esteem and mutual respect, and not the condescending, patronising, niggardly expression of good-will, unfortunately in vogue at the present time, with many. And above all, this is needed, between types of religious expression coming from the study of mental phenomena,—unfortunately even now laying exclusive claim to the name of religion—and those expressions of religion whose heads are penetrating more into the secrets of heaven, though their feet are clinging to earth, I mean, the so-called materialistic sciences.

To bring about this harmony, both will have to make concessions, sometimes very large, nay

more, sometimes plainful, but each will find itself the better for the sacrifice and more advanced in truth. And in the end, the knowledge which is confined within the domain of time and space,—will meet and become one with that which is beyond them both, where the mind and senses cannot reach,—the Absolute, the Infinite, the One without a second.

REASON AND RELIGION.

(Delivered in England.)

A sage called Nârada went to another sage named Sanat Kumâra to learn about truth, and Sanat Kumâra enquired what he had studied already. Narada answered, that he had studied the Vedas, Astronomy, and various other things yet he had got no satisfaction. Then there was a conversation between the two, in the course of which Sanat Kumâra remarked, that all this knowledge of the Vedas, of Astronomy, and of Philosophy, was but secondary; sciences were but secondary. That which made us realise the Brahman, was the supreme, the highest knowledge. This idea we find in every religion, and that is why religion always laid claim to be the supreme knowledge. Knowledge of the sciences covers, as it were, only part of our lives, but the knowledge which religion brings to us is eternal, as infinite as the truth it preaches. Claiming this superiority, religions

have many times looked down unfortunately, on all secular knowledge, and not only so, but many times have refused to be justified by the aid of secular knowledge. In consequence, all the world over there have been fights between secular knowledge and religious knowledge, the one claiming infallible authority as its guide, refusing to listen to anything that secular knowledge has to say on the point, the other, with its shining instrument of reason, wanting to cut to pieces everything religion could bring forward. This fight has been and is still waged in every country. Religions have been again and again defeated, and almost exterminated. The worship of the goddess of Reason during the French Revolution, was not the first manifestation of that phenomenon in the history of humanity, it was a re-enactment of what had happened in ancient times, but in modern times it has assumed greater proportions. The physical sciences are better equipped now than formerly, and religions have

become less and less equipped. The foundations have been all undermined, and the modern man, whatever he may say in public, knows in the privacy of his heart that he can no more, "believe." Believing certain things because an organized body of priests tells him to believe, believing because it is written in certain books, believing because his people like him to believe, the modern man knows to be impossible for him. There is, of course, a number of people who seem to acquiesce in the so-called popular faith, but we also know for certain that they do not think. Their idea of belief may be better translated as, "not-thinking-carelessness." This fight cannot last much longer without breaking to pieces all the buildings of religion. The question is, is there a way out? To put it in a more concrete form: Is religion to justify itself by the discoveries of reason, through which every other science justifies itself? Are the same methods of investigation which we apply to sciences and knowledge outside, to be

applied to the science of Religion? In my opinion this must be so, and I am also of opinion that the sooner it is done the better. If a religion is destroyed by such investigations, it was then all the time useless, unworthy superstition; and the sooner it goes the better. I am thorougly convinced that its destruction would be the best thing that could happen. All that is dross will be taken off, no doubt, but the essential parts of religion will emerge triumphant out of this investigation. Not only will it be made scientific, as scientific at least, as any of the conclusions of physics, or chemistry, but will have greater strength, because physics, or chemistry has no internal mandate to vouch for its truth, which religion has.

People who deny the efficacy of any rationalistic investigation into religion, seem to me somewhat to be contradicting themselves. For instance, the Christian claims that his religion is the only true one because it was revealed to so and so. The Mahomedan makes

the same claim for his religion; his is the only true one, because it was revealed to so and so. But the Christian says to the Mahomedan: "Certain parts of your ethics do not seem to be right. For instance, your books say, my Mahomedan friend, that an infidel may be converted to the religion of Mahomet by force, and if he will not accept the Mahomedan religion he may be killed, and any Mahomedan who kills such an infidel will get a sure entry into heaven, whatever may have been his sins or misdeeds." The Mahomedan will retort by saying: "It is right for me to do so, because my book enjoins it. It will be wrong on my part not to do so." The Christian says, "but my book does not say so." The Mahomedan replies—"I do not know; I am not bound by the authority of your book; my book says 'kill all the infidels.' How do you know which is right and which is wrong? Surely what is written in my book is right, and what your book says, 'do not kill,' is wrong. You also say the

samething, my Christian friend ; you say, that what Jehovah declared to the Jews is right to do, and what he forbade them to do is wrong. So say I, Allah declared in my book, that certain things should be done, and that certain things should not be done, and that is all the test of right and wrong." In spite of that the Christian is not satisfied ; he insists on a comparison of the morality of the Sermon on the Mount with the morality of the Koran. How is this to be decided ? Certainly not by the books, because the books fighting between themselves cannot be the judges. Decidedly then we have to admit that there is something more universal than these books, something higher than all the ethical codes that are in the world, something which can judge between the strength of inspirations of different nations. Whether we declare it boldly, clearly, or not, it is evident that here we appeal to reason. Now the question arises, if this light of reason is able to judge between inspiration and inspiration,

and if this light can uphold its standard when the quarrel is between prophet and prophet, if it has the power of understanding anything whatsoever of religion. If it has not, nothing can determine the hopeless fight of books and prophets which has been going on through ages; for it means that all religions are mere lies, hopelessly contradictory, without any constant idea of ethics. The proof of religion depends on the truth of the constitution of man, and not on any books. These books are the outgoings, the effects of man's constitution; man made these books. We are yet to see the books that made man. Reason is equally an effect of that common cause, the constitution of man, where our appeal must be. What do I mean by reason? I mean what every educated man or woman is wanting to do at the present time, to apply the discoveries of secular knowledge to religion. The first principle of reasoning is, that the particular is explained by the general, the general by the more general, until

we come to the universal. For instance, we have the idea of law. If something happens and we believe that it is the effect of such and such a law, we are satisfied; that it is an explanation for us. What we mean by that explanation is, that it is proved that this one effect, which had dissatisfied us, is only one particular of a general mass of occurrences which we designate by the word law. When one apple fell, Newton was disturbed, but when he found that all apples fell, it was gravitation and he was satisfied. This is one principle of human knowledge. I see a particular being, a human being, in the street. I refer him to the bigger conception of man, and I am satisfied; I know he is a man by referring him to the more general. So the particulars are to be referred to the general, the general to the more general, and everything at last to the universal, the last concept that we have, the most universal—that of existence. Existence is the most universal concept. We are all human beings; that is to

say that each one of us is, as it were, a particular part of the general concept, humanity. A man, and a cat, and a dog, are all animals. These particular examples, as man, or dog, or cat, are parts of a bigger and more general concept, animals. The man, and the cat, and the dog, and the plant, and the tree, all come under the still more general concept, life. Again, all these, all beings, and all materials, come under the one concept of existence, for we all are in it. This explanation merely means referring the particular to a higher concept, finding more of its kind. The mind, as it were, has stored up numerous classes of such generalisations. It is, as it were, full of pigeon-holes where all these ideas are grouped together, and whenever we find a new thing the mind immediately tries to find out its type in one of these pigeon-holes. If we find it we put the new thing in there and are satisfied, and we are said to have known the thing. This is what is meant by knowledge, and no more. And if we

do not find that there is something like it, we are dissatisfied, and have to wait until we find a further classification for it, already existing in the mind. Therefore, as I have already pointed out, knowledge is more or less classification. There is something more. A second explanation of knowledge is, that the explanation of a thing must come from inside and not from outside. There had been the belief, that when a man threw up a stone and it fell, some demon dragged it down. Many occurrences which are really natural phenomena are attributed by people to unnatural beings. That a ghost dragged down the stone, was an explanation that was not in the thing itself, it was an explanation from outside; but the second explanation of gravitation is something in the nature of the stone; the explanation is coming from inside. This tendency you will find throughout modern thought; in one word, what is meant by science is, that the explanations of things are in their own nature, and that no

external beings or existences are required to explain what is going on in the universe. The chemist never requires demons, or ghosts, or anything of that sort, to explain his phenomena. The physicist never requires any one of these, to explain the things he knows, nor does any other scientist. And this is one of the features of science which I mean to apply to religion. In this religions are found wanting, and that is why they are crumbling into pieces. Every science wants its explanations from inside, from the very nature of things, and the religions are not able to supply this. There is an ancient theory of a personal Deity entirely separate from the universe, which has been held from the very earliest times. The arguments in favour of this have been repeated again and again, how it is necessary to have a God entirely separate from the universe, an extra-cosmic deity, who has created the universe out of his will, and is conceived by religion to be its ruler. We find, apart from all these arguments, the

Almighty God painted as the All-merciful, and at the same time, inequalities remain in the world. These things do not concern the philosopher at all, but he says the heart of the thing was wrong; it was an explanation from outside, and not inside. What is the cause of the universe? Something outside of it, some being who is moving this universe! And just as it was found insufficient to explain the phenomenon of the falling stone, so this was found insufficient to explain religion. And religions are falling to pieces, because they cannot give a better explanation than that.

Another idea connected with this, the manifestation of the same principle, that the explanation of everything comes from inside it, is the modern law of evolution. The whole meaning of evolution is simply that the nature of a thing is reproduced, that the effect is nothing but the cause in another form, that all the potentialities of the effect were present in the cause, that the whole of creation is but an

evolution and not a creation. That is to say, every effect is a reproduction of a preceding cause, changed only by the circumstances, and thus it is going on throughout the universe, and we need not go outside the universe to seek the causes of these changes; they are within. It is unnecessary to seek for any cause outside. This also is breaking down religion. What I mean by breaking down religion is, that religions that have held on to the idea of an extra-cosmic deity, that he is a very big man and nothing else, can no more stand on their feet; they have been pulled over, as it were.

Can there be a religion satisfying these two principles? I think there can be. In the first place we have seen that we have to satisfy the principle of generalisation. The generalisation principle ought to be satisfied along with the principle of evolution. We have to come to an ultimate generalisation, which not only will be the most universal of all generalisations, but out of which everything else must come. It will

be of the same nature as the lowest effect ; the cause, the highest, the ultimate, the primal cause, must be the same as the lowest and most distant of its effects, a series of evolutions. The Brahman of the Vedanta fulfills that condition, because Brahman is the last generalisation to which we can come. It has no attributes but is Existence, Knowledge and Bliss—Absolute. Existence, we have seen, is the very ultimate generalisation which the human mind can come to. Knowledge, does not mean the knowledge we have, but the essence of that, that which is expressing itself in the course of evolution in human beings or in other animals, as knowledge. The essence of that knowledge is meant, the ultimate fact beyond, if I may be allowed to say so, even, consciousness. That is what is meant by knowledge and what we see in the universe as the essential unity of things. To my mind, if modern science is proving anything again and again, it is this that we are one—mentally, spiritually, and physi-

cally. It is wrong to say we are even physically different. Supposing we are materialists, for argument's sake, we shall have to come to this, that the whole universe is simply an ocean of matter, of which you, and I, are like little whirlpools. Masses of matter are coming into each whirlpool, taking the whirlpool form, and coming out as matter again. The matter that is in my body, may have been in yours a few years ago, or in the sun, or may have been the matter in a plant, and so on, in a continuous state of flux. What is meant by your body and my body? It is the oneness of the body. So with thought. It is an ocean of thought, one infinite mass, in which your mind and my mind are like whirlpools. Are you not seeing the effect now, how my thoughts are entering into yours, and yours into mine? The whole of our lives are one; we are one, even in thought. Coming to a still further generalisation, the essence of matter and thought is their potentiality of spirit, this is the unity from which all

have come, and that must essentially be one. We are absolutely one, we are physically one, we are mentally one, and as spirit, it goes without saying, that we are one, if we believe in spirit at all. This oneness is the one fact that is being proved every day by modern science. To proud man it is told, you are the same as that little worm there; think not that you are something enormously different from it; you are the same. You have been that in a previous incarnation, and the worm has crawled up to this man state of which you are so proud. This grand preaching, the oneness of things, making us one with everything that exists, is the great lesson to learn, for most of us are very glad to be made one with higher beings, but nobody wants to be made one with lower beings. Such is human ignorance, that if any one's ancestors were men whom society honored, even if they were brutish, if they were robbers, even robber barons, every one of us would try to trace our ancestry to them; but

if, among our ancestors we had poor, honest gentlemen, none of us wants to trace our ancestry to them. But the scales are falling from our eyes, truth is beginning to manifest itself more and more, and that is a great gain to religion. That is exactly the teaching of the Advaita, of which I am lecturing to you. The Self is the essence of this universe, the essence of all souls; He is the essence of your own life, nay, "Thou art That." You are one with this universe. He who says he is different from others, even by a hair's breadth, immediately becomes miserable. Happiness belongs to him who knows this oneness, who knows he is one with this universe.

Thus we see that the religion of the Vedanta can satisfy the demands of the scientific world, by referring it to the highest generalisation, and to the law of evolution. That the explanation of a thing comes from within itself, is still more completely satisfied by Vedanta. The Brahman, the God of the Vedanta, has

nothing outside of Himself; nothing at all. All this indeed is He; He is in the universe; He is the universe Himself. "Thou art the man, Thou art the woman, Thou art the young man walking in the pride of youth, Thou art the old man tottering in his step." He is here. Him we see and feel; in Him we live, and move, and have our being. You have that conception in the New Testament. It is that idea, God immanent in the universe, the very essence, the heart, the soul of things. He manifests Himself, as it were, in this universe. You and I are little bits, little points, little channels, little expressions, all living inside of that infinite ocean of Existence, Knowledge and Bliss. The difference between man and man, between angels and man, between man and animals, between animals and plants, between plants and stones, is not in kind, because every one from the highest angel to the lowest particle of matter, is but an expression of that one infinite ocean, and the difference is only in degree. I

am a low manifestation, you may be a higher, but in both the materials are the same. You and I are both outlets of the same channel, and that is God; as such, your nature is God, and so is mine. You are of the nature of God by your birthright; so am I. You may be an angel of purity, and I may be the blackest of demons, nevertheless, my birthright is that infinite ocean of Existence, Knowledge and Bliss. So is yours. You have manifested yourself more to-day. Wait; I will manifest myself more yet, for I have it all within me. No extraneous explanation is sought; none is asked for. The sum total of this whole universe is God Himself. Is God then matter? No, certainly not, for matter is that God perceived by the five senses; that God as perceived through the intellect is mind; and when the spirit sees, He is seen as spirit. He is not matter, but whatever is real in matter, is He. Whatever is real in this chair, is He, for the chair requires two things to make it. Something was outside which my senses

brought to me, and to which my mind contributed something else, and the combination of these two is the chair. That which existed eternally independent of the senses and of the intellect was the Lord Himself. Upon Him the senses are painting chairs, and tables, and rooms, and houses, and worlds, and moons, and suns, and stars, and everything else. How is it, then, that we all see this same chair, that we are all alike painting these various things on the Lord, on this Existence, Knowledge and Bliss? It need not be that all paint the same way, but those who paint the same way are on the same plane of existence and therefore they see one another's paintings, as well as one another. There may be millions of beings between you and me, who do not paint the Lord in the same way, and them and their paintings we do not see. On the other hand, as you all know, the modern physical researches are tending more and more to demonstrate that what is real is but the finer;

the gross is simply appearance. However that may be, we have seen that if any theory of religion can stand the test of modern reasoning, it is the Advaita, because it fulfills its two requirements. It is the highest generalisation, beyond even personality, a generalisation which is common to every being. A generalisation ending in the Personal God can never be universal, for, first of all, to conceive of a Personal God we must say, He is all merciful, all good. But this world is a mixed thing, some good and some bad. We cut off what we like, and generalise that into a Personal God! Just as you say a Personal God is this and that, so you have also to say that He is not this and not that. And you will always find that the idea of a Personal God has to carry with it a personal devil. That is how we clearly see, that the idea of a Personal God is not a true generalisation. We have to go beyond, to the Impersonal. In That, the universe exists, with all its joys and miseries, for

whatever exists in it has all come from the Impersonal. What sort of a God can He be to whom we attribute evil and other things? The idea is, that both good and evil are different aspects, or manifestations of the same thing. The idea that they were two was a very wrong idea from the first, and it has been the cause of a good deal of the misery in this world of ours—the idea that right and wrong are two separate things, cut and dried, independent of each other, that good and evil are two eternally separable and separate things. I should be very glad to see a man who could show me something which is good all the time, and something which is bad all the time. As if one could stand and gravely define some occurrences in this life of ours as good and good alone, and some which are bad and bad alone. That which is good to-day may be evil to-morrow. That which is bad to-day may be good to-morrow. What is good for me may be bad for you. The conclusion is, that like every

other thing, there is an evolution in good and bad too. There is something which in its evolution, we call, in one degree, good, and in another, evil. The storm that kills my friend, I call evil, but that may have saved the lives of hundreds of thousands of people by killing the bacilli in the air. They call it good, but I call it evil. So both good and evil belong to the relative world, to phenomena. The impersonal God we propose is not a relative God; therefore it cannot be said that It is either good or bad, but that It is something beyond, because It is neither good nor evil. Good, however, is a nearer manifestation of It than evil.

What is the effect of accepting such an Impersonal Being, an Impersonal Deity? What shall we gain? Will religion stand as a factor in human life, our consoler, our helper? What becomes of the desire of the human heart to pray for help to some being? That will all remain. The Personal God will remain, but on a better basis. He has been strengthened by

the Impersonal. We have seen that without the Impersonal, the Personal cannot remain. If you mean to say there is a being entirely separate from this universe, who has created this universe just by His will out of nothing, that cannot be proved. Such state of things cannot be. But if we understand the idea of the Impersonal, then the idea of the Personal can remain there also. This universe in its various forms, is but the various readings of the same Impersonal. When we read it with the five senses, we call it the material world. If there be a being with more senses than five, he will read it as something else. If one of us gets the electrical sense, he will see the universe as something else again. There are various forms of that same Owners, of which all these various ideas of worlds are but various readings, and the Personal God is the highest reading that can be attained to, of that Impersonal, by the human intellect. So that the Personal God is true as much as this

chair is true, as much as this world is true, but no more. It is not absolute truth. That is to say, the Personal God is that very Impersonal God and therefore it is true, just as I, as a human being, am true and not true at the same time. It is not true that I am what you see I am; you can satisfy yourself on that point. I am not the being that you take me to be. You can satisfy your reason as to that, because light, and various vibrations, or conditions of the atmosphere, and all sorts of motions inside me, have contributed to my being looked upon as what I am, by you. If any one of these conditions change, I am different again. You may satisfy yourself by taking a photograph of the same man under different conditions of light. So I am what I appear in relation to your senses, and yet, in spite of all these facts, there is an unchangeable something of which all these are different states of existence, the impersonal me, of which thousands of me's are different persons. I was a child, I was young,

I am getting older. Every day of my life, my body and thoughts are changing, but, in spite of all these changes, the sum-total of them constitutes a mass which is a constant quantity. That is the impersonal me, of which all these manifestations form, as it were, parts. Similarly, the sum-total of this universe is immovable, we know, but everything pertaining to this universe consists of motion, everything is in a constant state of flux, everything changing and moving; at the same time, we see that the universe as a whole is immovable, because motion is a relative term. I move with regard to the chair, which does not move. There must be at least two to make motion. If this whole universe is taken as a unit there is no motion; with regard to whom should it move? Thus the Absolute is unchangeable and immovable, and all the movements and changes are only in the phenomenal world, the limited. That whole is Impersonal, and within this Impersonal are all

these various persons beginning with the lowest atom, up to God, the Personal God, the Creator, the Ruler of this Universe, to Whom we pray, to Whom we kneel, and so on. Such a Personal God can be established with a great deal of reason. Such a Personal God is explicable as the highest manifestation of the Impersonal. You and I are very low manifestations, and the Personal God is the highest of which we can conceive. Nor can you or I become that Personal God. When the Vedanta says you and I are God, it does not mean the Personal God. To take an example. Out of a mass of clay a huge elephant of clay is manufactured, and out of the same clay, a little clay mouse is made. Would the clay mouse ever be able to become the clay elephant? But put them both in water and they are both clay; as clay they are both one, but as mouse and elephant there will be an eternal difference between them. The Infinite, the Impersonal is like the clay in the example.

We and the Ruler of the Universe are one, but as manifested beings, men, we are His eternal slaves, His worshippers. Thus we see that the Personal God remains. Everything else in this relative world remains, and religion is made to stand on a better foundation. Therefore it is necessary that we first know the Impersonal in order to know the Personal. As we have seen, the law of reason says, the particular is only known through the general, so all these particulars, from man to God, are only known through the Impersonal, the highest generalisation. Prayers will remain, only they will get a better meaning. All those senseless ideas of prayer, the low stages of prayer, which are simply giving words to all sorts of silly desires in our minds, perhaps, will have to go. In all sensible religions, they never allow prayers to God; they allow prayers to gods. That is quite natural. The Roman Catholics pray to the saints; that is quite good, but to pray to God, is senseless. To ask God to give you a

breath of air, to send down a shower of rain, to make fruits grow in your garden, and so on, is quite unnatural. The saints, however, who were little beings like ourselves, may help us. But to pray to the Ruler of the Universe, prating every little need of ours, and from our childhood saying, "Oh Lord, I have a headache; let it go," is ridiculous. There have been millions of souls that have died in this world, and they are all here; they have become gods and angels; let them come to your help. But God! It cannot be. Unto Him we must go for higher things. A fool indeed is he, who, resting on the banks of the Ganges digs a little well for water; a fool indeed is he who living near a mine of diamonds, digs for bits of crystal.

And indeed we shall be fools if we go to the Father of all mercy, Father of all love, for trivial earthly things. Unto Him, therefore, we shall go for light, for strength, for love. But so long as there is weakness and a craving for

servile dependence in us, there will be these little prayers and ideas of the worship of the Personal God. But those who are highly advanced, do not care for such little helps, they have well nigh forgotten all about this seeking things for themselves, wanting things for themselves. The predominant idea in them is—not I, but thou, my brother. Those are the fit persons to worship the Impersonal God; and what is the worship of the Impersonal God? No slavery there,—"Oh Lord, I am nothing, have mercy on me." You know the old Persian poem, translated into English. "I came to see my beloved. The doors were closed. I knocked and a voice came from inside, 'who art thou?' 'I am so and so.' The door was not opened. A second time I came and knocked; I was asked the same question, and gave the same answer; the door opened not. I came a third time, and the same question came. I answered —'I am Thee, my love,' and the door opened." Worship of the Impersonal God is through

truth. And what is truth? That I am He. When I say that I am not Thou, it is untrue. When I say I am separate from you it is a lie, a terrible lie. I am one with this universe, born one. It is self-evident to my senses that I am one with the universe. I am one with the air that surrounds me, one with heat, one with light, eternally one with the whole Universal Being, who is called this universe, who is mistaken for the universe, for it is He and nothing else, the eternal subject in the heart who says, 'I am,' in every heart. The deathless one, the sleepless one, ever awake, the immortal, whose glory never dies, whose powers never fail. I am one with That. This is all the worship of the Impersonal, and what is the result? The whole life of man will be changed. Strength, strength it is that we want so much in this life, for what we call sin and sorrow have all one cause, and that is our weakness. With weakness comes ignorance, and with ignorance comes misery. It will make us strong. Then

miseries will be laughed at, then the violence of the vile will be smiled at, and the ferocious tiger will reveal behind its tiger's nature, my own Self. That will be the result. That soul is strong that has become one with the Lord; none else is strong. In your own Bible, what do you think was the cause of that strength of Jesus of Nazareth, that immense, infinite strength which laughed at traitors, and blessed those that were willing to murder him? It was that, 'I and my Father are one;' it was that prayer, 'Father, just as I am one with you, so make them all one with me.' That is the worship of the Impersonal God. Be one with the universe, be one with Him. And this Impersonal God requires no demonstrations, no proofs. He is nearer to us than even our senses, nearer to us than our own thoughts; it is in and through Him that we see and think. To see anything, I must first see Him. To see this wall I first see Him, and then the wall, for He is the eternal subject. Who is seeing

whom? He is here in the heart of our hearts. Bodies and minds change, misery, happiness, good and evil come and go, days and years roll on, life comes and goes, but He dies not. The same voice, "I am, I am," is eternal, unchangeable. In Him and through Him we know everything. In Him and through Him we see everything. In Him and through Him we sense, we think, we live, and we are. And that I, which we mistake to be a little I, limited, is not only my I, but yours, the I of everyone, of the animals, of the animals, of the angles, of the lowest of the low. That 'I am' is the same in the murderer as in the saint, the same in the rich as in the poor, the same in man as in woman, the same in man as in animals. From the lowest amœba to the highest angel, He resides in every soul, and eternally declares, "I am He, I am He." When we have understood that voice eternally present there, when we have learnt this lesson, the whole universe will have expressed its secret, nature will have

given up her secret to us. Nothing more remains to be known. Thus we find the truth for which all religions search, that all this knowledge of material sciences is but secondary; that is the only true knowledge which makes us one with this Universal God of the Universe.

THE IDEAL OF A UNIVERSAL RELIGION.

HOW IT MUST EMBRACE DIFFERENT TYPES OF MINDS AND METHODS.

Wheresoever our senses reach, or whatsoever our minds imagine, we find therein the action and reaction of two forces, the one counteracting the other and causing the constant play of the mixed phenomena that we see around us, and of those which we feel in our minds. In the external world, the action of these opposite forces is expressing itself, as attraction and repulsion, or as centripetal and centrifugal forces; and in the internal, as, love and hatred, good and evil. We repel some things, we attract others. We are attracted by one, we are repelled by another. Many times in our lives, we find that without any reason whatsoever, we are, as it were, attracted towards certain persons; at other times, similarly, we are repelled by others. This is patent to all, and the higher the field of action, the more

potent, the more remarkable, are the influences of these opposite forces. Religion is the highest plane of human thought and life, and herein we find that the workings of these two forces have been most marked. The intensest love that humanity has ever known has come from religion, and the most diabolical hatred that humanity has known, has also come from religion. The noblest words of peace that the world has ever heard, have come from men on the religious plane, and the bitterest denunciation that the world has ever known, has been uttered by religious men. The higher the object of any religion and the finer its organisation, the more remarkable are its activities. No other human motive has deluged the world with so blood much as religion; at the same time nothing has brought into existence so many hospitals and asylums for the poor; no other human influence has taken such care, not only of humanity, but also of the lowest of animals, as religion has done. Nothing makes us so

cruel as religion, and nothing makes us so tender as religion. This has been so in the past, and will also, in all probability, be so in the future. Yet from out of the midst of this din and turmoil, this strife and struggle, this hatred and jealousy of religions and sects, there have arisen, from time to time, potent voices, drowning all this noise—making themselves heard from pole to pole, as it were,—proclaiming peace, and harmony. Will it ever come?

Is it possible that there should ever reign unbroken harmony in this plain of mighty religious struggle? The world is exercised in the latter part of this century by the question of harmony; in society, various plans are being proposed, and attempts are made to carry them into practice; but we know how difficult it is to do so. People find that it is almost impossible to mitigate the fury of the struggle of life, to tone down the tremendous nervous tension that is in man. Now, if it is so difficult to bring harmony and peace to the physical

plane of life—the external, gross and outward side of it—then a thousand times more difficult is it to bring peace and harmony to rule over the internal nature of man. I would ask you for the time being to come out of the network of words; we have all been hearing from childhood of such things as love, peace, charity, equality, and universal brotherhood; but they have become to us mere words without meaning, words which we repeat like parrots, and it has become quite natural for us to do so. We cannot help it. Great souls, who first felt these great ideas in their hearts, manufactured these words; and at that time many understood their meaning. Later on, ignorant people have taken up those words to play with them, and made religion a mere play upon words, and not a thing to be carried into practice. It becomes, "my father's religion," "our nation's religion," "your country's religion," and so forth. It becomes only a phase of patriotism to profess any religion, and patriotism is always partial.

To bring harmony into religion, must always be difficult. Yet we will consider this problem of the harmony of religions.

We see that in every religion there are three parts—I mean in every great and recognised religion. First, there is the philosophy—which presents the whole scope of that religion, setting forth its basic principles, the goal and the means of reaching it. The second part is mythology, which is philosophy made concrete. It consists of legends relating to the lives of men, or of supernatural beings, and so forth. It is the abstractions of philosophy concretised in the more or less imaginary lives of men and supernatural beings. The third part is the ritual. This is still more concrete, and is made up of forms and ceremonies, various physical attitudes, flowers and incense, and many other things that appeal to the senses. In these consists the ritual. You will find that, all recognised religions have these three elements. Some lay more stress on one, some

on another. Let us now take into consideration the first part, philosophy. Is there one universal philosophy? Not yet. Each religion brings out its own doctrines, and insists upon them as being the only true ones. And not only does it do that, but it thinks that he, who does not believe in them, must go to some horrible place. Some will even draw the sword to compel others to believe as they do. This is not through wickedness, but through a particular disease of the human brain called fanaticism. They are very sincere, these fanatics, the most sincere of human beings; but they are quite as irresponsible as other lunatics in the world. This disease of fanaticism is one of the most dangerous of all diseases. All the wickedness of human nature is roused by it. Anger is stirred up, nerves are strung high, and human beings become like tigers.

Is there any mythological similarity, is there any mythological harmony, any universal mythology accepted by all religions? Certainly

not. All religions have their own mythology, only each of them says, " My stories are not mere myths." Let us try to understand the question by illustration. I simply mean to illustrate, I do not mean criticism of any religion. The Christian believes that God took the shape of a dove, and came down to earth; to him this is history, and not mythology. The Hindu believes that God is manifested in the cow. Christians say that to believe so is mere mythology, and not history, that it is superstition. The Jews think that, if an image be made in the form of a box, or a chest, with an angel on either side, then it may be placed in the Holy of Holies; it is sacred to Jehovah; but if the image be made in the form of a beautiful man or woman, they say, " This is a horrible idol; break it down!" This is our unity in mythology! If a man stands up and says, " My prophet did such and such a wonderful thing," others will say, " That is only supersitition;" but at the same time they say that their own prophet did

still more wonderful things, which they hold to be historical. Nobody in the world, as far as I have seen, is able to make out the fine distinction between history and mythology, as it exists in the brains of these persons. All such stories, to whatever religion they may belong, are really mythological, mixed up occasionally, it may be, with a little history.

Next come the rituals. One sect has one particular form of ritual, and thinks that that is holy, while the rituals of another sect, are simply arrant superstition. If one sect worships a peculiar sort of symbol, another sect says, "Oh, it is horrible." Take for instance a general form of symbol. The phallus symbol is certainly a sexual symbol, but gradually that aspect of it has been forgotten, and it stands now as a symbol of the Creator. Those nations which have this as their symbol never think of it as the phallus; it is just a symbol, and there it ends. But a man from another race or creed sees in it nothing but the phallus, and begins

"Universal brotherhood! We are all equal, therefore let us make a sect." As soon as you make a sect you protest against equality, and equality is no more. Mohammedans talk of universal brotherhood, but what comes out of that in reality? Why, that anybody who is not a Mohammedan will not be admitted into the brotherhood; he will more likely have his throat cut. Christians talk of universal brotherhood; but anyone who is not a Christian must go to that place, where he will be eternally barbecued.

And so we go on in this world in our search after universal brotherhood and equality. When you hear such talk in the world, I would ask you to be a little reticent, to take care of yourselves, for, behind all this talk is often the intensest selfishness. "In the winter sometimes a thunder could comes up; it roars and roars, but it does not rain; but in the rainy season the clouds speak not, but deluge the world with water." So those who are *really*

workers, and *really* feel at heart the universal brotherhood of man, do not talk much, do not make little sects for universal brotherhood; but their acts, their movements, their whole life, show out clearly that they in truth possess the feeling of brotherhood for mankind, that they have love and sympathy for all. They do not speak, they *do* and they *live*. This world is too full of blustering talk. We want a little more earnest work, and less talk.

So far we see that it is hard to find any universal features in regard to religion, and yet we know that they exist. We are all human beings, but are we all equal? Certainly not. Who says we are equal? Only the lunatic. Are we all equal in our brains, in our powers, in our bodies? One man is stronger than another, one man has more brain power than another. If we are all equal, why is there this inequality? Who made it? We. Because we have more or less powers, more or less brain, more or less physical strength, it must make a

difference between us. Yet, we know that the doctrine of equality appeals to our hearts. We are all human beings; but some are men, and some are women. Here is a black man, there is a white man; but all are men, all belong to one humanity. Various are our faces; I see no two alike, yet we are all human beings. Where is this one humanity? I find a man or a woman, either dark or fair; and among all these faces, I know that there is an abstract humanity which is common to all. I may not find it when I try to grasp it, to sense it, and actualise it, yet I know for certain that it is there. If I am sure of anything, it is of this humanity which is common to us all. It is through this generalised entity that I see you as a man or a woman. So it is with this universal religion, which runs through all the various religions of the world in the form of God; it must and does exist through eternity. "I am the thread that runs through all these pearls," and each pearl is a religion or even a sect thereof. Such are

the different pearls, and the Lord is the thread that runs through all of them; only the majority of mankind are entirely unconscious of it.

Unity in variety is the plan of the universe. We are all men, and yet we are all distinct from one another. As a part of humanity, I am one with you, and as Mr. So-and-so I am different from you. As a man you are separate from the woman; as a human being you are one with the woman. As a man you are separate from the animal, but as living beings, man, woman, animal, and plant, are all one; and as existence, you are one with the whole universe. That universal existence is God, the ultimate Unity in the universe. In Him we are all one. At the same time, in manifestation, these differences must always remain. In our work, in our energies, as they are being manifested outside, these differences must always remain. We find then that, if by the idea of a universal religion it is meant that one set of doctrines should be believed in by all mankind, it is

wholly impossible; it can never be, there can never be a time when all faces will be the same. Again, if we expect that there will be one universal mythology, that is also impossible; it cannot be. Neither can there be one universal ritual. Such a state of things can never come into existence; if it ever did, the world would be destroyed, because variety is the first principle of life. What makes us formed beings? Differentiation. Perfect balance would be our destruction. Suppose the amount of heat in this room, the tendency of which is towards equal and perfect diffusion, gets that kind of diffusion, then for all practical purposes that heat will cease to be. What makes motion possible in this universe? Lost balance. The unity of sameness can come only when this universe is destroyed, otherwise such a thing is impossible. Not only so, it would be dangerous to have it. We must not wish that all of us should think alike. There would then be no thought to think. We should be all alike, as

the Egyptian mummies in a museum, looking at each other without a thought to think. It is this difference, this differentiation, this losing of the balance between us, which is the very soul of our progress, the soul of all our thought. This must always be.

What then do I mean by the ideal of universal religion? I do not mean any one universal philosophy, or any one universal mythology, or any one universal ritual, held alike by all; for I know that this world must go on working, wheel within wheel, this intricate mass of machinery, most complex, most wonderful. What can *we* do then? We can make it run smoothly, we can lessen the friction, we can grease the wheels, as it were. How? By recognising the natural necessity of variation. Just as we have recognised unity by our very nature, so we must also recognise variation. We must learn that truth may be expressed in a hundred thousand ways, and that each of these ways is true as far as it goes. We must

learn that the same thing can be viewed from a hundred different standpoints, and yet be the same thing. Take for instance the sun. Suppose a man standing on the earth looks at the sun when it rises in the morning; he sees a big ball. Suppose he starts on a journey towards the sun and takes a camera with him, taking photographs at every stage of his journey, until he reaches the sun. The photographs of each stage will be seen to be different from those of the other stages; in fact, when he gets back, he brings with him so many photographs of so many different suns, as it would appear; and yet we know that the same sun was photographed by the man at the different stages of his progress. Even so is it with the Lord. Through high philosophy or low, through the most exalted mythology or the grossest, through the most refined ritualism or arrant fetishism, every sect, every soul, every nation, every religion, consciously or unconsciously, is struggling upward, towards God;

every vision of truth that man has, is a vision of Him and of none else. Suppose we all go with vessels in our hands to fetch water from a lake. One has a cup, another a jar, another a bucket, and so forth, and we all fill our vessels. The water in each case naturally takes the form of the vessel carried by each of us. He who brought the cup, has the water in the form of a cup; he who brought the jar, his water is in the shape of a jar; and so forth; but, in every case, water, and nothing but water, is in the vessel. So it is in the case of religion; our minds are like these vessels, and each one of us is trying to arrive at the realisation of God. God is like that water filling these different vessels, and in each vessel, the vision of God comes in the form of the vessel. Yet He is One. He is God in every case. This is the only recognition of universality that we can get.

So far it is all right theoretically, but is there any way of practically working out this

harmony in religions? We find that this recognition, that all the various views of religion are true, has been very very old. Hundreds of attempts have been made in India, in Alexandria, in Europe, in China, in Japan, in Thibet, and lastly in America, to formulate a harmonious religious creed, to make all religions come together in love. They have all failed, because they did not adopt any practical plan. Many have admitted that all the religions of the world are right, but they show no practical way of bringing them together, so as to enable each of them to maintain its own individuality in the conflux. The plan alone is practical, which does not destroy the individuality of any man in religion, and at the same time shows him a point of union with all others. But so far, all the plans of religious harmony that have been tried, while proposing to take in all the various views of religion, have, in practice, tried to bind them all down to a few doctrines, and so

have produced more new sect, fighting, struggling, and pushing against each other.

I have also my little plan. I do not know whether it will work or not, and I want to present it to you for discussion. What is my plan? In the first place I would ask mankind to recognise this maxim—"Do not destroy." Iconoclastic reformers do no good to the world. Break not, pull not anything down, but build. Help, if you can; if you cannot, fold your hands and stand by and see things go on. Do not injure, if you connot render help. Say not a word against any man's convictions so far as they are sincere. Secondly, take man where he stands, and from thence give him a lift. If it be true that God is the centre of all religions, and that each of us is moving towards Him along one of these radii, then it is certain that all of us *must* reach that centre. And at the centre, where all the radii meet, all our differences will cease; but until we reach there, differences there must be. All

these radii converge to the same centre. One, according to his nature, travels along one of these lines, and another, along another; and if we all push onward along our own lines, we shall surely come to the centre, because, "All roads lead to Rome." Each of us is naturally growing and developing according to his own nature; each will in time come to know the highest truth, for after all, men must teach themselves. What can you and I do? Do you thing you can teach even a child? You can not. The child teaches himself. Your duty is to afford opportunities and to remove obstacles. A plant grows. Do *you* make the plant grow? Your duty is to put a hedge round it and see that no animal eats up the plant, and there your duty ends. The plant grows of itself. So is it in regard to the spiritual growth of every man. None can teach you; none can make a spiritual man of you; you have to teach yourself; your growth must come from inside.

What can an external teacher do? He can remove the obstructions a little, and there his duty ends. Therefore help, if you can; but do not destroy. Give up all ideas that *you* can make men spiritual. It is impossible. There is no other teacher to you than your own soul. Recognise this. What comes of it? In society we see so many different natures. There are thousands and thousands of varieties of minds and inclinations. A thorough generalisation of them is impossible, but for our practical purpose it is sufficient to have them characterised into four classes. First, there is the active man, the worker; he wants to work, and there is tremendous energy in his muscles and his nerves. His aim is to work; to build hospitals, do charitable deeds, make streets, to plan and to organise. Then there is the emotional man, who loves the sublime and the beautiful to an excessive degree. He loves to think of the beautiful, to enjoy the æsthetic side of nature, and adore

Love and the God of Love. He Loves with his whole heart the great souls of all times, the prophets of religions, and the Incarnations of God on earth; he does not care whether reason can or cannot prove that Christ or Buddha existed; he does not care for the exact date when the *Sermon On The Mount* was preached, or for the exact moment of Krishna's birth; what he cares for, is their personalities, their lovable figures. Such is his ideal. This is the nature of the lover, the emotional man. Then, there is the mystic, whose mind wants to analyse its own self, to understand the workings of the human mind, what the forces are that are working inside, and how to know, manipulate, and obtain control over them. This is the mystical mind. Then, there is the philosopher, who wants to weigh everything and use his intellect even beyond the possibilities of all human philosophy.

Now a religion, to satisfy the largest proportion of mankind, must be able to supply

food for all these various types of minds ; and where this capability is wanting, the existing sects all become one-sided. Suppose you go to a sect which preaches love and emotion. They sing and weep, and preach love. But as soon as you say, "My friend, that is all right, but I want something stronger than this ; a little reason, and philosophy ; I want to understand things step by step and more rationally,' "Get out," they say, and they not only ask you to get out, but would send you to the other place, if they could. The result is, that that sect can only help people of an emotional turn of mind ; they not only do not help others, but try to destroy them ; and the most wicked part of the whole thing is, that they will not only *not* help others, but do not believe in their sincerity. Again, there are philosophers, who talk of the wisdom of India and the East and use big psychological terms, fifty syllables long, but if an ordinary man like me, goes to them and says, "Can you tell me anything to

make me spiritual?" The first thing they would do would be to smile and say, "Oh you are too far below us in your reason. What can you understand about spirituality?" These are high-up philosophers. They simply show you the door. Then there are the mystical sects, who speak all sorts of things about different planes of existence, different states of mind, and what the power of the mind can do, and so on; and if you are an ordinary man and say, "Show me anything good that I can do; I am not much given to speculation; can you give me anything that will suit me?" They will smile, and say, "Listen to that fool; he knows nothing, his existence is for nothing." And this is going on everywhere in the world. I would like to get extreme exponents of all these different sects, and shut them up in a room, and photograph their beautiful derisive smiles!

This is the existing condition of religion, the existing condition of things. What I want to propagate is a religion that will be equally

acceptable to all minds; it must be equally philosophic, equally emotional, equally mystic and equally conducive to action. If professors from the colleges come, scientific men and physicists, they will court reason. Let them have it as much as they want. There will be a point beyond which they will think they cannot go, without breaking with reason. They will say, "These ideas of God and salvation, are superstitious, give them up!" I say, "Mr. Philosopher, this body of yours is a bigger superstition. Give *it* up, don't go home to dinner or to your philosophic chair. Give up the body, and if you cannot, cry quarter and sit down." For religion must be able to show how to realise the philosophy that teaches us that this world is one, that there is but One Existence in the universe. Similarly, if the mystic comes, we must welcome him, be ready to give him the science of mental analysis, and practically demonstrate it before him. And if emotional people come, we must sit, laugh and weep with them in the name of

the Lord ; we must "drink the cup of love and become mad." If the energetic worker comes we must work with him, with all the energy that we have. And this combination will be the ideal of the nearest approach to a universal religion. Would to God that all men were so constituted, that, in their minds, *all* these elements of philosophy, mysticism, emotion, and of work were equally present in full ! That is the ideal, my ideal of a perfect man. Everyone who has only one or two of these elements of character, I consider "one-sided"; and this world is almost full of such "one-sided" men, with knowledge of that one road only, in which they move ; and anything else is dangerous and horrible to them. To become harmoniously balanced in all these four directions, is *my* ideal of religion. And this religion is attained by what we, in India, call *Yoga*—union. To the worker, it is union between men and the whole of humanity ; to the mystic, between his lower and Higher Self ; to the lover, union between himself and the

God of love; and to the philosopher, it is the union of *all* existence. This is what is meant by *Yoga*. This is a Sanskrit term, and these four divisions of *Y*oga have, in Sanskrit, different names. The man who seeks after this kind of union is called a *Yogin*. The worker is called the *Karma-Yogin*. He who seeks the union through love is called the *Bhakti-Yogin*. He who seeks it through mysticism is called the *Raja-Yogin*. And he who seeks it through philosophy is called the *Jnana-Yogin*. So this word *Yogin* comprises them all.

Now first of all let me take up *Raja-Yoga*. What is this *Raja-Yoga*, this controlling of the mind? In this country you are associating all sorts of hobgoblins with the word *Yoga*. I am afraid, therefore, I must start by telling you that it has nothing to do with such things. No one of these *Yogas*, gives up reason, no one of them asks you to be hoodwinked, or to deliver your reason, into the hands of priests of any type whatsoever. No one of them

asks that you should give your allegience to any superhuman messenger. Each one of them tells you to *cling* to your reason, to hold fast to it. We find in all beings three sorts of instruments of knowledge. The first is instinct, which you find most highly developed in animals; this is the lowest instrument of knowledge. What is the second instrument of knowledge? Reasoning. You find that, most highly developed in man. Now in the first place, instinct is an inadequate instrument; to animals, the sphere of action is very limited, and within that limit, instinct acts. When you come to man, you see it is largely developed into reason. The sphere of action also has here become enlarged. Yet even reason is still very insufficient. Reason can go only a little way and then it stops, it cannot go any further; and if you try to push it, the result is helpless confusion, reason itself becomes unreasonable. Logic becomes argument in a circle. Take for instance, the very

basis of our perception, matter and force. What is matter? That which is acted upon by force. And force? That which acts upon matter. You see the complication, what the logicians call see-saw, one idea depending on the other, and this again depending on that. You find a mighty barrier before reason, beyond which reasoning cannot go; yet it always feels impatient to get into the region of the Infinite beyond. This world, this universe which our senses feel, or our mind thinks, is but one atom, so to say, of the Infinite, projected on to the plane of consciousness; and within that narrow limit, defined by the network of consciousness, works our reason, and not beyond. Therefore, there must be some other instrument to take us beyond, and that instrument is called inspiration. So instinct, reason, and inspiration are the three instruments of knowledge. Instinct belongs to animals, reason to man, and inspiration to God-men. But in all human beings are to be found in a more or less developed condition,

the germs of all these three instruments of knowledge. To have these mental instruments evolved, the germs must be there. And this must also be remembered, that one instrument is a development of the other, and therefore does not contradict it. It is reason that develops into inspiration, and therefore inspiration does not contradict reason, but fulfils it. Things which reason cannot get at, are brought to light by inspiration; and they do not contradict reason. The old man does not contradict the child, but fulfils the child. Therefore you must always bear in mind that the great danger lies, in mistaking the lower form of instrument to be the higher. Many times instinct is presented before the world as inspiration, and then come all the spurious claims for the gift of prophecy. A fool or a semi-lunatic thinks that the confusion going on in his brain is inspiration, and he wants men to follow him. The most contradictory, irrational nonsense that has been preached in the world, is simply the instinctive jargon of

confused lunatic brains trying to pass for the language of inspiration.

The first test of true teaching must be, that the teaching should *not* contradict reason. And you may see that such is the basis of all these *Yogas*. We take the *Raja-Yoga*, the psychological *Yoga*, the psychological way to union. It is a vast subject, and I can only point out to you now the central idea of this *Yoga*. We have but one method of acquiring knowledge. From the lowest man to the highest *Yogin*, all have to use the same method; and that method is what is called, concentration. The chemist who works in his laboratory concentrates all the powers of his mind, brings them into one focus, and throws them on the elements; and the elements stand analysed, and thus his knowledge comes. The astronomer has also concentrated the powers of his mind, and brought them into one focus; and he throws them on to objects, through his telescope; and stars and systems roll forward, and give up their secrets

to him. So it is in every case; with the professor in his chair, the student with his book, with every man who is working to know. You are hearing me, and if my words interest you, your mind will become concentrated on them; and then suppose a clock strikes, you will not hear it, on account of this concentration; and the more you are able to concentrate your mind the better you will understand me, and the more I concentrate my love and powers, the better I shall be able to give expression to what I want to convey to you. The more this power of concentration, the more knowledge is acquired, because this is the one and only method of acquiring knowledge. Even the lowest shoeblack, if he gives more concentration will black shoes better; the cook with concentration will cook a meal all the better. In making money, or in worshipping God, or in doing any thing, the stronger the power of concentration, the better will that thing be done. This is the one call, the one knock, which opens

the gates of nature, and lets out floods of light. This, the power of concentration, is the only key to the treasure-house of knowledge. The system of *Raja-Yoga* deals almost exclusively with this. In the present state of our body we are so much distracted, and the mind is frittering away its energies upon a hundred sorts of things. As soon as I try to calm my thoughts, and concentrate my mind upon any one object of knowledge, thousands of undesired impulses rush into the brain, thousands of thoughts rush into the mind and disturb it. How check it and bring the mind under control is the whole subject of study in *Raja-Yoga.*

Now take *Karma-Yoga*, the attainment of God through work. It is evident that in society there are many persons who seem to be born for some sort of activity or other, whose minds cannot be concentrated on the plane of thought alone, and who have but one idea, concretised in work, visible and tangible. There must be a science for this kind of life too. Each one

of us is engaged in some work, but the majority of us fritter away the greater portion of our energies, because we do not know the secret of work. *Karma-Yoga* explains this secret and teaches where and how to work, how to employ to the greatest advantage, the largest part of our energies, in the work that is before us. But with this secret we must take into consideration the great objection against work, namely, that it causes pain. All misery and pain come from attachment. I want to do work, I want to do good to a human being; and it is ninety to one that that human being, whom I have helped, will prove ungrateful, and go against me; and the result to me is pain. Such things deter mankind from working; and it spoils a good portion of the work and energy of mankind, this fear of pain and misery. *Karma-Yoga* teaches us how to work for work's sake, unattached, without caring who is helped, and what for. The *Karma-Yogin* works because it is his nature, because he *feels* that it is good

for him to do so, and he has no object beyond that. His position in this world is that of a giver, and he never cares to receive anything. He knows that he is giving, and does not ask for anything in return and therefore he eludes the grasp of misery. The grasp of pain, whenever it comes, is the result of the reaction of "attachment."

There is then the *Bhakti-Yoga* for the man of emotional nature, the lover. He wants to love God, he relies upon and uses all sorts of rituals, flowers, incense, beautiful buildings, forms, and all such things. Do you mean to say they are wrong? One fact I must tell you. It is good for you to remember, in this country especially, that the world's great spiritual giants have all been produced only by those religious sects which have been in possession of very rich mythology and ritual. All sects that have attempted to worship God without any form or ceremony, have crushed without mercy everything that is beautiful and sublime in re-

ligion. Their religion is a fanaticism at best, a dry thing. The history of the world is a standing witness to this fact. Therefore do not decry these rituals and mythologies. Let people have them; let those, who so desire have them. Do not exhibit that unworthy derisive smile, and say, "They are fools; let them have it." Not so; the greatest men I have seen in my life, the most wonderfully developed in spirituality, have all come through the discipline of these rituals. I do not hold myself worthy to sit at their feet, and for *me* to criticise *them*! How do I know how these ideas act upon the human mind, which of them I am to accept and which to reject? We are apt to criticise everything in the world without sufficient warrant. Let people have all the mythology they want, with its beautiful inspirations; for you must always bear in mind that emotional natures do not care for abstract definitions of the truth. God to them, is something tangible, the only thing that is real; they

feel, hear and see Him and love Him. Let them have their God. Your rationalist seems to them to be like the fool, who, when he saw a beautiful statue, wanted to break it to find out of what material it was made. *Bhakti-Yoga* teaches them how to love, without any ulterior motives, loving God and loving the good because it is good to do so, not for going to heaven, nor to get children, wealth, or anything else. It teaches them that love itself is the highest recompense of love—that God himself is love. It teaches them to pay all kinds of tribute to God as the Creator, the Omnipresent, Omniscient, Almighty Ruler, the Father and the Mother. The highest phrase that can express Him, the highest idea that the human mind can conceive of him, is, that He is the God of Love. Wherever there is love, it is He. "Wherever there is any love, it is He, the Lord is present there." Where the husband kisses the wife, He is there in the kiss; where the mother kisses the child, He is there in the kiss;

where friends clasp hands, He, the Lord, is present as the God of Love. When a great man loves and wishes to help mankind, He is there giving freely His bounty out of His love to mankind. Wherever the heart expands, He is there manifested. This is what the *Bhakti-Yoga* teaches.

We lastly come to the *Jnana-Yogin,* the philosopher, the thinker, he who wants to go beyond the visible. He is the man who is not satisfied with the little things of this world. His idea is to go beyond the daily routine of eating, drinking and so on ; not even the teaching of thousands of books will satisfy him. Not even all the sciences will satisfy him ; at the best, they only bring this little world before him. What else will give him satisfaction ? Not even myriads of systems of worlds will satisfy him ; they are to him but a drop in the ocean of existence. His soul wants to go beyond all that into the very heart of being, by seeing Reality as It is ; by realising It, by being It, by

becoming one with that Universal Being. That is the philosopher; to say that God is the Father or the Mother, the Creator of this universe, its Protector, and Guide, is to him, quite inadequate to express Him. To him, God is the life of his life, the soul of his soul. God is his own Self. Nothing else remains which is other than God. All the mortal parts of him become pounded by the weighty strokes of philosophy, and are brushed away. What at last truly remains, is God Himself.

Upon the same tree there are two birds, one on the top, the other below. The one on the top is calm, silent and majestic, immersed in its own glory; the one on the lower branches, eating sweet and bitter fruits by turns, hopping from branch to branch, is becoming happy and miserable by turns. After a time the lower bird eats an exceptionally bitter fruit, and gets disgusted and looks up and sees the other bird, that wondrous one of golden plumage, who eats neither sweet nor bitter fruit, who is

neither happy nor miserable, but calm, Self-centred and sees nothing beyond his Self. The lower bird longs for this condition but soon forgets it, and again begins to eat the fruit. In a little while, he eats another exceptionally bitter fruit, which makes him feel miserable, and he again looks up, and tries to get nearer to the upper bird. Once more he forgets and after a time he looks up, and so on he goes again and again, until he comes very near to the beautiful bird and sees the reflection of light from his plumage playing around his own body, and he feels a change and seems to melt away; still nearer he comes, and everything about him melts away, and at last he understands this wonderful change. The lower bird was, as it were, only the substantial-looking shadow, the reflection of the higher; he, himself, was in essence, the upper bird all the time. This eating of fruits, sweet and bitter, this lower, little bird, weeping and happy by turns, was a vain chimera, a

dream : all along, the real bird was there above, calm and silent, glorious and majestic, beyond grief, beyond sorrow. The upper bird is God, the Lord of this universe ; and lower bird is the human soul, eating the sweet and bitter fruits of this world. Now and then, comes a heavy blow to the soul. For a time, he stops the eating and goes towards the unknown God, and a flood of light comes. He thinks that this world is a vain show. Yet again the senses drag him down, and he begins as before, to eat the sweet and bitter fruits of the world. Again an exceptionally hard blow comes. His heart becomes open again to divine light ; thus gradually he approaches God, and as he gets nearer and nearer, he finds his old self melting away. When he has come near enough he sees that he is no other than God, and he exclaims, " He whom I have described to you as the Life of this universe, as present in the atom, and in suns and moons, He is the basis of our own life, the Soul of our soul. Nay,

thou art That," This is what this *Jnana-Yoga* teaches. It tells man that he is essentially divine. It shows to mankind the real unity of being, and that each one of us is the Lord God Himself, manifested on earth. All of us, from the lowest worm that crawls under our feet to the highest beings to whom we look up with wonder and awe, all, are manifestations of the same Lord.

Lastly, it is imperative that all these various *Yogas* should be carried out in practice ; mere theories about them will not do any good. First we have to hear about them, then we have to think about them. We have to reason the thoughts out, impress them on our minds, and we have to meditate on them, realise them, until at last, they become our whole life. No longer will religion remain a bundle of ideas or theories, nor an intellectual assent ; it will enter into our very self. By means of intellectual assent we may to-day subscribe to many foolish things,' and change our minds

altogether to-morrow. But true religion never changes. Religion is realisation; not talk, nor doctrine, nor theories, however beautiful they may be. It is being and becoming, not hearing or acknowledging, but, it is the whole soul becoming changed into what it believes. That is religion.

THE WAY TO THE REALISATION OF A UNIVERSAL RELIGION.

(Delivered in the Universalist Church, Pasadena, California, 28 January, 1900.)

No search has been dearer to the human heart than that which brings to us light from God. No study has taken so much of human energy, whether in times past or present, as the study of the soul, of God and of human destiny. However immersed we are in our daily occupations, in our ambitions, in our work, in the midst of the greatest of our struggles, sometimes, there will come a pause: the mind stops, and wants to know something beyond this world. Sometimes it catches glimpses of a realm beyond the senses, and a struggle to get at it is the result. Thus it has been throughout the ages, in all countries. Man has wanted to look beyond, wanted to expand himself; and all that we call progress, evolution, has been always measured by that

one search, the search for human destiny, the search for God.

As our social struggles are represented, amongst different nations, by different social organisations, so is man's spiritual struggle represented by various religions; and as different social organisations are constantly quarrelling, are constantly at war with each other, so these spiritual organisations have been constantly at war with each other, constantly quarrelling. Men belonging to a particular social organisation, claim that the right to live only belongs to them, and so long as they can, they want to exercise that right at the cost of the weak. We know that just now there is a fierce struggle of that sort going on in South Africa. Similarly each religious sect has claimed the exclusive right to live. And, thus, we find, that though there is nothing that has brought to man more blessings than religion, yet, at the same time, there is nothing that has brought more horror than

religion. Nothing has made more for peace and love than religion ; nothing has engendered fiercer hatred than religion. Nothing has made the brotherhood of man more tangible than religion ; nothing has bred more bitter enmity between man and man, than religion. Nothing has built more charitable institutions, more hospitals for men, and even for animals, than religion ; nothing has deluged the world with more blood than religion. We know, at the same time that there has always been an undercurrent of thought ; there have been always parties of men, philosophers, students of comparative religions, who have tried and are still trying to bring about harmony in the midst of all these jarring and discordant sects. As regards certain countries, these attempts have succeeded, but as regards the whole world, they have failed.

There are some religions which have come down to us from the remotest antiquity, which are imbued with the idea that all sects should

be allowed to live; that every sect has a meaning, a great idea, imbedded within itself, and therefore it is necessary of the good of the world, and ought to be helped. In modern times, the same idea is prevailing and attempts are made from time to time to reduce it to practice. These attempts do not always come up to our expectations, up to the required afficiency. Nay, to our great disappointment, we sometimes find that we are quarrelling all the more.

Now, leaving aside dogmatic study, and taking a common-sense view of the thing, we find at the start, that there is a tremendous life-power in all the great religions of the world. Some may say that they are ignorant of this, but ignorance is no excuse. If a man says: "I do not know what is going on in the external world, therefore things that are going on in the external world do not exist," that man is inexcusable. Now, those of you that watch the movement of religious thought all over the

world, are perfectly aware that not one of the great religions of the world has died; not only so, each one of them is progressive. Christians are multiplying, Mohammedans are multiplying, the Hindus are gaining ground; and the Jews, also, are increasing, and by their spreading all over the world and increasing rapidly, the fold of Judaism is constantly expanding.

Only one religion of the world—an ancient, great religion—has dwindled away, and that is the religion of Zoroastranism, the religion of the ancient Persians. Under the Mohammedan conquest of Persia, about a hundred thousand of these people came and took shelter in India and some remained in ancient Persia. Those that were in Persia, under the constant persecution of the Mohammedans dwindled down, till there are at most only ten thousand; in India there are about eight thousand of them, but they do not increase. Of course, there is an initial difficulty: they do not convert others to their religion. And then, this handful of

persons living in India, with the pernicious custom of cousin marriage, do not multiply. With this single exception, all the great religions are living, spreading and increasing. We must remember that all the great religions of the world are very ancient; not one has been formed at the present time, and that every religion of the world owes its origin to the country between the Ganges and the Euphrates; not one great religion has arisen in Europe, nor one in America, not one; every religion is of Asiatic origin and belongs to that part of the world. If what the modern scientists say is true, that the survival of the fittest is the test, these religions prove by their still living that they are yet fit for some people; there is a reason why they should live, they bring good to many. Look at the Mohammedans, how they are spreading in some places in Southern Asia, and spreading like fire in Africa. The Buddhists are spreading all over central Asia, all the time. The Hindus, like

the Jews, do not convert others, still, gradually, other races are coming within Hinduism and adopting the manners and customs of the Hindus and falling into line with them. Christianity, you all know, is spreading;—though, I am not sure that the results are equal to the energy put forth. The Christians' attempt at propaganda has one tremendous defect—and that is the defect of all Western institutions: the machine consumes ninety per cent of the energy: there is too much machinery. Preaching has always been the business of the Asiatics. The Western people are grand in organisation, social institutions, armies, governments, etc.; but when it comes to preaching religion, they cannot come near the Asiatic, whose business it has been all the time, and he knows it, and he does not use too much machinery.

This, then, is a fact in the present history of the human race: that all these great religions exist and are spreading and multiplying.

Now, there is a meaning, certainly, to this; and had it been the will of an All-wise and All-merciful Creator that one of these religions should exist and the rest should die, it would have become a fact long, long ago. If it were a fact that only one of these religions is true and all the rest false, by this time it would have covered the whole ground. But this is not so; not one has gained all the ground. All religions sometimes advance—sometimes decline. Now, just think of this: in your own country there are more than sixty millions of people, and only twenty-one millions professing religions of all sorts. So it is not always progress. In every country, probably, if the statistics are taken, you would find that religions are sometimes progressing and sometimes going back. Sects are multiplying all the time. If the claims of a religion, that it has all the truth, and God has given it all this truth in a certain book, were true, why are there so many sects? Fifty years do not pass before there are

twenty sects founded upon the same book. If God has put all the truth in certain books, he does not give us those books in order that we may quarrel over texts. That seems to be the fact. Why is it? Even if a book were given by God which contained all the truth about religion, it would not serve the purpose because nobody could understand the book. Take the Bible, for instance, and all the sects that exist amongst Christians; each one puts its own interpretation upon the same text, and each says that it alone understands the text and all the rest are wrong. So with every religion. There are many sects among the Mohammedans and among the Buddhists, and hundreds among the Hindus. Now, I bring these facts before you in order to show you that any attempt to bring all humanity to one method of thinking in spiritual things, has been a failure and always will be a failure. Every man that starts a theory, even at the present day finds that if he goes twenty miles away

from his followers, they will make twenty sects. You see that happening all the time. You cannot make all conform to the same ideas; that is a fact, and I thank God that it is so. I am not against any sect. I am glad that sects exist, and I only wish they may go on multiplying more and more. Why? Simply because of this: If you and I and all who are present here, were to think exactly the same thoughts, there would be no thoughts for us to think. We know that two or more forces must come into collision, in order to produce motion. It is the clash of thought, the differentiation of thought, that awakes thought. Now, if we all thought alike, we would be like Egyptian mummies in a museum looking vacantly at one another's faces:—no more than that! Whirls and eddies occur only in a rushing, living stream. There are no whirlpools in stagnant, dead water. When religions are dead, there will be no more sects; it will be the perfect peace and harmony of the grave. But so long as mankind thinks,

there will be sects. Variation is the sign of life, and it must be there. I pray that they may multiply so that at last there will be as many sects as human beings, and each one will have his own method, his individual method of thought in religion.

But this thing exists already. Each one of us is thinking in his own way, but this natural course has been obstructed all the time and is still being obstructed. If the sword is not used directly, other means will be used. Just hear what one of the best preachers in New York says: he preaches that the Philippinoes should be conquered because that is the only way to teach Christianity to them! They are already Catholics; but he wants to make them Presbyterians, and for this, he is ready to lay all this terrible sin of bloodshed upon his race. How terrible! And this man is one of the greatest preachers of his country, one of the best informed men. Think of the state of the world when a man like that is not ashamed to stand

up and utter such arrant nonesense ; and think of the state of the world when an audience cheers him ! Is this civilisation ? It is the old blood-thirstiness of the tiger, the cannibal, the savage, coming out once more under new names, new circumstances. What else can it be ? If the state of things is such, now, think of the horrors through which the world passed in olden times, when every sect was trying by every means in its power, to tear to pieces the other sects. History shows that. The tiger in us is only asleep ; it is not dead. When opportunities come it jumps up, and as of old, uses its claws and fangs. Apart from the sword, apart from material weapons, there are weapons still more terrible ; contempt, social hatred, and social ostracism,—now these are the most terrible of all inflictions, that are hurled against persons who do not think exactly in the same way as we do. And why should everybody think just as we do ? I do not see any reason. If I am a rational man, I

should be glad they do not think just as I do. I do not want to live in a grave-like land: I want to be a man, in a world of men. Thinking beings must differ; difference is the first sign of thought. If I am a thoughtful man, certainly I ought to like to live amongst thoughtful persons, where there are differences of opinion.

Then, arises the question, how can all these varieties be true? If one thing is true, its negation is false. How can contradictory opinions be true at the same time? This is the question which I intend to answer. But I will first ask you: Are all the religions of the world really contradictory? I do not mean the external forms in which great thoughts are clad. I do not mean the different buildings, languages, rituals, books, etc., employed in various religions, but I mean the internal soul of every religion. Every religion has a soul behind it, and that soul may differ from the soul of another religion; but are they contradictory? Do they contradict or supplement each other?—that is

the question. I took up the question when I was quite a boy, and have been studying it all my life. Thinking that my conclusion may be of some help to you, I place it before you. I believe that they are not contradictory; they are supplementary. Each religion, as it were, takes up one part of the great universal truth, and spends its whole force in embodying and typifying that part of the great truth. It is therefore addition, not exclusion. That is the idea. System after system arises, each one embodying a great idea, and ideals must be added to ideals. And this is the march of humanity. Man never progresses, from error to truth, but from truth to truth; from lesser truth, to higher truth,—but it is never from error to truth. The child may develop more than the father, but was the father inane? The child is the father plus something else. If your present state of knowledge is much greater than it was when you were a child, would you look down upon that stage now? Will you look

back and call it inanity? Why, your present stage is the knowledge of the child plus something more.

Then, again: we also know that there may be almost contradictory points of view of the same thing, but they will all indicate the same thing. Suppose a man is journeying towards the sun and as he advances, he takes a photograph of the sun at every stage. When he comes back, he has many photographs of the sun, which he places before us. We see that not two are alike, and yet, who will deny that all these are photographs of the same sun, from different standpoints? Take four photographs of this church from different corners: how different they would look, and yet they would all represent this church. In the same way, we are all looking at truth, from different standpoints which vary according to our birth, education, surroundings, and so on. We are viewing truth, getting as much of it as these circumstances will permit, colouring the truth

with our own heart, understanding it with our own intellect, and grasping it with our own mind. We can only know as much of truth as is related to us, as much of it as we are able to receive. This makes the difference between man and man and occasions sometimes, even contradictory ideas; yet, we all belong to the same great universal truth.

My idea, therefore, is that all these religions are differing forces in the economy of God, working for the good of mankind; and that not one can become dead, not one can be killed. Just as you cannot kill any force in nature, so you cannot kill any one of these spiritual forces. You have seen that each religion is living. From time to time it may retrograde or go forward. At one time it may be shorn of a good many of its trappings; at another time, it may be covered with all sorts of trappings; but all the same, the soul is ever there, it can never be lost. The ideal which every religion

represents is never lost, and so every religion is intelligently on the march.

And that universal religion about which philosophers, and others, have dreamed in every country, already exists. It is here. As the universal brotherhood of man is already existing, so also is universal religion. Who of you that have travelled far and wide, have not found brothers and sisters in every nation? I have found them all over the world. Brotherhood already exists; only, there are numbers of persons who fail to see this, and only upset it by crying for new brotherhoods. Uuiversal religion too, is already existing. If the priests and other people that have taken upon themselves the task of preaching different religions, simply cease preaching for a few moments, we shall see, it is there. They are disturbing it all the time, because it is to their interest. You see that priests in every country are very conservative. Why is it so? There are very few priests who lead the people; most of them are

led by the people, and are their slaves and servants. If you say it is dry, they say it is so; if you say it is black, they say, it is black. If the people advance, the priests must advance. They cannot lag behind. So, before blaming the priests—it is the fashion to blame the priest—you ought to blame yourselves. You only get what you deserve. What would be the fate of a priest who wants to give you new and advanced ideas and lead you forward? His children would probably starve and he would be clad in rags. He is governed by the same worldly laws that you are. "If you go on," he says, "let us march." Of course, there are exceptional souls, not cowed down by public opinion. They see the truth and truth alone they value. Truth has got hold of them, has got possession of them, as it were, and they cannot but march ahead. They never look backward, and for them there are no people; God alone exists for them, He is the Light before them and they are following that Light.

I met a Mormon gentleman in this country, who tried to persuade me to his faith. I said, "I have great respect for your opinions, but in certain points we do not agree. I belong to a monastic order, and you believe in marrying many wives. But why don't you go to India to preach?" Then he was astonished; he said: "Why, you don't believe in any marriage at all, and we believe in polygamy, and yet you ask me to go to your country!" I said, "Yes; my countrymen will hear every religious thought wherever it may come from. I wish you would go to India; first because I am a great believer in sects. Secondly there are many men in India who are not at all satisfied with any of the existing sects, and on account of this dissatisfaction, they will not have anything to do with religion, and, possibly, you might get some of them." The greater the number of sects, the more chance of people getting religion. In the hotel, where there are all sorts of food, everyone has a chance to get his

appetite satisfied. So I want sects to multiply in every country, that more people may have a chance to be spiritual. Do not think that people do not like religion. I do not believe that. The preachers cannot give them what they need. The same man that may have been branded as an atheist, as a materialist, or what not, may meet a man who gives him the truth needed by him, and he may turn out the most spiritual man in the community. We can eat only in our own way. For instance, we Hindus eat with our fingers. Our fingers are suppler than yours, you cannot use your fingers the same way. Not only the food should be supplied, but it should be taken in your own particular way. Not only must you have the spiritual ideas, but they must come to you according to your own method. They must speak your own language, the language of your soul, and then alone they will satisfy you. When the man comes who speaks my language and gives truth in my language, I at once under-

stand it and receive it for ever. This is a great fact.

Now, from this, we see that there are various grades and types of human minds and what a task religions take upon them. A man brings forth two of three doctrines and claims that his religion ought to satisfy all humanity. He goes out into the world, God's menagerie, with a little cage in hand, and says: "God and the elephant and everybody has to go into this. Even if we have to cut the elephant into pieces, he must go in." Again, there may be a sect with a few good ideas. They say: "All men must come in!" "But there is no room for them." "Never mind! cut them to pieces, get them in, anyhow; if they don't get in; why, they will be damned." No preacher, no sect have I ever met that pause and ask: "Why is it, people do not listen to us?" Instead, they curse the people and say, "The people are wicked." They never ask: "How is it people do not listen to my words? Why

cannot I make them see the truth? Why cannot I speak in their language? Why cannot I open their eyes?" Surely, they ought to know better, aud when they find people do not listen to them, if they curse anybody it should be themselves. But it is always the people's fault! They never try to make their sect large enough to embrace every one.

Therefore, we at once see why there has been so much narrow-mindedness, the part always claiming to be the whole; the little, finite unit always laying claim to the infinite. Think of little sects, born within a few hundred years, out of fallible human brains, making this arrogant claim of knowing the whole of God's infinite truth! Think of the arrogance of it! If it shows anything, it is this, how vain human beings are. And it is no wonder that such claims have always failed, and, by the mercy of the Lord, are always destined to fail. In this line the Mohammedans were the best off: every step forward was made with the sword—

the Koran in the one hand and the sword in the other: "Take the Koran, or you must die; there is no alternative!" You know from history how phenomenal was their success; for six hundred years nothing could resist them, and then there came a time when they had to cry halt. So will it be with other religions if they follow the same methods. We are such babes! We always forget human nature. When we begin life we think that our fate will be something extraordinary, and nothing can make us disbelieve that. But when we grow old, we think differently. So with religions. In their early stages, when they spread a little, they get the idea that they can change the minds of the whole human race in a few years, and go on killing and massacring to make converts by force; then they fail, and begin to understand better. We see that these sects did not succeed in what they started out to do, which was a great blessing. Just think if one of those fanatical sects had succeeded all over

the world, where would man be to-day? Now, the Lord be blessed that they did not succeed! Yet, each one represents a great truth; each religion represents a particular excellence,—something which is its soul. There is an old story which comes to my mind: There were some ogresses who used to kill people and do all sorts of mischief; but they, themselves, could not be killed, until, someone found out that their souls were in certain birds, and so long as the birds were safe nothing could destroy the ogresses. So, each one of us has as it were, such a bird, where our soul is; has an ideal, a mission to perform in life. Every human being is an embodiment of such an ideal, such a mission. Whatever else you may lose, so long as that ideal is not lost, and that mission is not hurt, nothing can kill you. Wealth may come and go, misfortunes may pile mountains high, but if you have kept the ideal entire, nothing can kill you. You may have grown old, even a hundred years old, but

if that mission is fresh and young in your heart, what can kill you? But when that ideal is lost and that mission is hurt, nothing can save you. All the wealth, all the power of the world will not save you. And what are nations but multiplied individuals? So, each nation has a mission of its own to perform in this harmony of races, and so long as that nation keeps to that ideal, that nation nothing can kill; but if that nation gives up its mission in life and goes after something else, its life becomes short, and it vanishes.

And so with religions. The fact that all these old religions are living to-day proves, that they must have kept that mission intact; in spite of all their mistakes, in spite of all difficulties, in spite of all quarrels, in spite of all the incrustation of forms and figures, the heart of every one of them is sound,—it is a throbbing, beating, living heart. They have not lost, any one of them, the great mission they come for. And it is splendid to study that mission. Take

Mohammedanism, for instance. Christian people hate no religion in the world so much as Mohammedanism. They think it is the very worst form of religion that ever existed. As soon as a man becomes a Mohammedan, the whole of Islam receives him as a brother with open arms, without making any distinction, which no other religion does. If one of your American Indians becomes a Mohammedan, the Sultan of Turkey would have no objection to dine with him. If he has brains, no position is barred to him. In this country, I have never yet seen a church where the white man and the negro can kneel side by side to pray. Just think of that: Islam makes its followers all equal,—so, that you see is the peculiar excellence of Mohammedanism. In many places in the Koran you find very sensual deas of life. Never mind. What Mohammedanism comes to preach to the world is this practical brotherhood of all belonging to their faith. That is the essential path of the

Mohammedan religion ; and all the other ideas about heaven, and of life etc., are not Mohammedanism. They are accretions.

With the Hindus you will find one national idea,—spirituality. In no other religion, in no other sacred books of the world, will you find so much energy spent in defining the idea of God. They tried to define the idea of soul so that no earthly touch might mar it. The spirit must be divine ; and spirit understood as spirit must not be made into a man. The same idea of unity, of the realisation of God, the omnipresent, is preached throughout. They think it is all nonsense to say that He lives in Heaven ; and all that. It is a mere human, anthropomorphic idea. All the heaven that ever existed is now and here. One moment in infinite time is quite as good as any other moment. If you believe in a God, you can see Him even now. We think religion begins when you have realised something. It is not believing in doctrines, nor giving intellectual assent,

nor making declarations. If there is a God, "Have you seen Him? If you say "no," then what right have you to believe in Him? If you are in doubt whether there is a God, why do you not struggle to see Him? Why do you not renounce the world and spend the whole of your life for this one object? Renunciation and spirituality are the two great ideas of India, and it is because India clings to these ideas that all her mistakes count for so little.

With the Christians, the central idea that has been preached by them is the same: "Watch and pray, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand,"—which means purify your minds and be ready! And that spirit never dies. You recollect that the Christians are, even in the darkest days, even in the most superstitious Christian countries, always trying to prepare themselves for the coming of the Lord, by trying to help others, building hospitals, and so on. So long as the Christian keep to that ideal, their religion lives.

Now, an ideal presents itself to my mind. It may be only a dream. I do not know whether it will ever be realised in this world, but sometimes it is better to dream a dream, than die on hard facts. Great truths, even in a dream, are good, better than bad facts. So, let us dream a dream :—

You know that there are various grades of mind. You may be a matter-of-fact, common-sense rationalist : you do not care for forms and ceremonies ; you want intellectual, hard, ringing facts and they alone will satisfy you. Then there are the Puritans, the Mohammedans, who will not allow a picture, or a statue in their place of worship. Very well ! But there is another man who is more artistic. He wants a great deal of art,—beauty of lines and curves, the colours, flowers, forms ; he wants candles, lights, and all the insignia and paraphernalia of ritual, that he may see God. His mind takes God in those forms, as yours takes it through the intellect. Then, there is the devotional

man, whose soul is crying for God; he has no other idea but to worship God, and to praise Him. Then again, there is the philosopher, standing outside all these, mocking at them. He thinks, "What nonsense they are! What ideas about God!"

They may laugh at each other, but each one has a place in this world. All these various minds, all these various types are necessary. If there ever is going to be an ideal religion, it must be broad and large enough to supply food for all these minds. It must supply the strength of philosophy to the philosopher, the devotee's heart to the worshipper; to the ritualist it will give all that the most marvellous symbolism can convey; to the poet, it will give as much of heart as he can take in, and other things besides. To make such a broad religion, we shall have to go back to the time when religions began and take them all in.

Our watchword, then, will be acceptance, and not exclusion. Not only toleration, for

so-called toleration is often blasphemy, and I do nor believe in it. I believe in acceptance. Why should I tolerate? Toleration means that I think that you are wrong and I am just allowing you to live. Is it not a blasphemy to think that you and I are allowing others to live! I accept all religions that were in the past, and worship with them all; I worship God with every one of them, in whatever form they worship Him. I shall go to the mosque of the Mohammedan; I shall enter the Christian's church and kneel before the crucifix; I shall enter the Budhistic temple, where I shall take refuge in Buddha and in his law. I shall go into the forest and sit down in meditation with the Hindu, who is trying to see the Light which enlightens the heart of every one.

Not only shall I do all these but I shall keep my heart open for all that may come in the future. Is God's book finished? or is it still a continuous revelation, going on? It is a marvellous book,—these Spiritual Revelations

of the world. The Bible, the Vedas, the Koran and all other sacred books, are but so many pages, and an infinite number of pages remain yet to be unfolded. I would leave it open for all of them. We stand in the present, but open ourselves to the infinite future. We take in all that has been in the past, enjoy the light of the present and open every window of the heart for all that will come in the future. Salutation to all the prophets of the past, to all the great ones of the present, and to all that are to come in the future!

SOUL, GOD AND RELIGION.

Through the vistas of the past the voice of the centuries is coming down to us; the voice of the sages of the Himalayas and the recluses of the forest; the voice that came to the Semitic races; the voice that spoke through Buddha and other spiritual giants; the voice that comes from those who live in the light that accompanied man in the beginning of this earth—the light, that shines wherever man goes and lives with him for ever—is coming to us even now. This voice is like the little rivulets that come from the mountains. Now they disappear, and now they appear again in stronger flow till finally they unite in one mighty majestic flood. The messages that are coming down to us from the prophets and holy men and women of all sects and nations, are joining their forces and speaking to us with the trumpet voice of the past. And the first message it brings us is: Peace be unto you

and to all religions. It is not a message of antagonism, but of one united religion. Let us study this message first: At the beginning of this century it was almost feared that religion was at an end. Under the tremendous sledge-hammer blows of scientific research, old superstitions were crumbling away like masses of porcelain. Those to whom religion meant only a bundle of creeds and meaningless ceremonials were in despair; they were at their wits' end. Everything was slipping between their fingers. For a time it seemed inevitable that the surging tide of agnosticism and materialism would sweep all before it. There were those who did not dare utter what they thought. Many thought the case hopeless and the cause of religion lost once and for ever. But the tide has turned and to the rescue has come—what? The study of comparative religions. By the study of different religions we find that in essence they are one. When I was a boy, this scepticism reached me,

and it seemed for a time as if I must give up all hope of religion. But fortunately for me I studied the Christian religion, the Mahommedan, the Buddhistic and others and what was my surprise to find that the same foundation principles taught by my religion were also taught by all religions. It appealed to me this way. What is the truth? I asked. Is this world true? Yes. Why? Because I see it. Are the beautiful sounds we just heard (the vocal and instrumental music) true? Yes. Because we heard them. We know that man has a body, eyes and ears: and he has a spiritual nature which we cannot see. And with his spiritual faculties he can study these different religions and find that whether a religion is taught in the forests and jungles of India or in a Christian land, in essentials all religions are one. This only shows us that religion is a constitutional necessity of the human mind. The proof of one religion depends on the proof of all the rest. For instance if I have six

fingers, and no one else has, you may well say that is abnormal. The same reasoning may be applied to the argument that only one religion is true and all other false. One religion only like one set of six fingers in the world, would be unnatural. We see therefore, that if one religion is true, all others must be true. There are differences in non-essentials, but in essentials they are all one. If my fingers are true, they prove that your five fingers are true too.

Wherever man is, he must develop a belief, he must develop his religious nature. And another fact I find in the study of the various religions of the world is that there are three different stages of ideas with regard to the soul and God. In the first place, all religions admit that apart from the body which perishes, there is a certain part or something which does not change like the body; a part that is immutable, eternal, that never dies; but some of the later religions teach that although there is a part of us that never dies, it had a beginning. But anything

that has a beginning must necessarily have an end. We—the essential part of us—never had a beginning, and will never have an end. And above us all, above this eternal nature, there is another eternal Being, without end—God. People talk about the beginning of the world, the beginning of man. The word *beginning* simply means the beginning of the cycle. It nowhere means the beginning of the whole Cosmos. It is impossible that creation could have a beginning. No one of you can imagine a time of beginning. That which has a beginning must have an end. "*Never did I not exist, nor you, nor will any of us ever hereafter cease to be.*" says the Bhagavad Gita. Wherever the beginning of creation is mentioned, it means the beginning of a cycle, Your body will meet with death, but your soul, never.

Along with this idea of the soul we find another group of ideas in regard to its perfection. The soul in itself is perfect. The New Testament of the Hebrews admits man perfect

at the beginning. Man made himself impure by his own actions. But he is to regain his old nature, his pure nature. Some speak of these things in allegories, fables and symbols. But when we begin to analyse these statements we find that they all teach that the human soul is in its very nature perfect, and that man is to regain that original purity. How? By knowing God. Just as the Hebrew Bible says, No man can see God but through the Son. What is meant by it? That seeing God is the aim and goal of all human life. The sonship must come before we become one with, the Father. Remember, that man lost his purity through his own actions. When we suffer, it is because of our own acts; God is not to be blamed for it. Closely connected with these ideas is the doctrine which was universal before the Europeans mutilated it, the doctrine of Reincarnation.

Some of you may have heard of and ignored it. This idea of reincarnation runs parallel

with the other doctrine of the eternity of the human soul. Nothing which ends at one point can be without a beginning and nothing that begins at one point can be without an end. We cannot believe in such a monstrous impossibility as the beginning of the human soul. The doctrine of reincarnation asserts the freedom of the soul. Suppose there was an absolute beginning. Then the whole burden of this impurity in man falls upon God! The all-merciful Father responsible for the sins of the world! If sin comes in this way, why should one suffer more than another? Why such partiality, if it comes from an all-merciful God? Why are millions trampled under foot? Why do people starve who never did anything to cause it? Who is responsible? If they had no hand in it, surely, God would be responsible. Therefore the better explanation is that one is responsibe for the miseries one suffers. If I set the wheel in motion, I am responsible for the results. And if I can bring misery, I

can also stop it. It necessarily follows that we are free. There is no such thing as fate. There is nothing to compel us. What have we done, that we can undo.

To one argument in connection with this doctrine I will ask your patient attention, as it is a little intricate. We gain all our knowledge through experience; that is the only way. What we call experiences are on the plane of consciousness. For illustration: A man plays a tune on a piano, he places each finger on each key consciously. He repeats this process till the movement of the fingers becomes a habit. He then plays a tune without having to pay special attention to each particular key. Similarly we find in regard to ourselves that our tendencies are the result of past conscious actions. A child is born with certain tendencies. Whence do they come? No child is born with a *tabula rasa*—with a clean, blank page—of a mind. The page has been written on previously The old Greek and Egyptian philosophers

taught that no child came with a vacant mind. Each child comes with a hundred tendencies generated by past conscious actions. It did not acquire these in this life, and we are bound to admit that it must have had them in past lives. The rankest materialist has to admit that these tendencies are the result of past actions, only they add that these tendencies come through heredity. Our parents, grand-parents and great-grand-parents come down to us through this law of heredity. Now if heredity alone explains this, there is no necessity of believing in the soul at all, because body explains everything. We need not go into the different arguments and discussions on materialism and spiritualism. So far the way is clear for those who believe in an individual soul. We see that to come to a reasonable conclusion we must admit that we have had past lives. This is the belief of the great philosophers and sages of the past and of modern times. Such a doctrine was believed in among the Jews. Jesus

Christ believed in it. He says in the Bible: "*Before Abraham was, I am.*" And in another place is said: "*This is Elias who is said to have come.*"

All the different religions which grew among different nations under varying circumstances and conditions, had their origin in Asia, and the Asiatics understand them well. When they came out from the mother-land, they got mixed up with errors. The most profound and noble ideas of Christianity were never understood in Europe because the ideas and images used by the writers of the Bible were foreign to it. Take for illustration the pictures of the Madonna. Every artist paints his Madonna according to his own preconceived ideas. I have been seeing hundreds of pictures of the Last Supper of Jesus Christ, and He is made to sit at a table. Now Christ never sat at a table; he squatted with others and they had a bowl in which they dipped bread,—not the kind of bread you eat to-day. It is hard for any

nation to understand the unfamiliar customs of other people; how much more difficult was it for Europeans to understand the Jewish customs after centuries of changes and accretions from Greek, Roman and other sources. Through all the myths and mythologies by which it is surrounded it is no wonder that the people get very little of the beautiful religion of Jesus, and no wonder that they have made of it a modern shop-keeping religion.

To come to our point. We find that all religions teach the eternity of the soul, as well as that its lustre has been dimmed. And that its primitive purity is to be regained by the knowledge of God. What is the idea of God in these different religions? The primary idea of God was very vague. The most ancient nations had different Deities,—sun, earth, fire, water. Among the ancient Jews we find numbers of these gods ferociously fighting with each other. Then we find Elohim whom the Jews and the Babylonians worshipped. We next,

find one God standing supreme. But the idea differed according to different tribes. They each asserted that their God was the greatest. And they tried to prove it by fighting. The one that could do the best fighting proved thereby that its God was the greatest. Those races were more or less savage. But gradually better and better ideas took the place of the old ones. All those old ideas are gone or going into the lumber-room. All those religions were the outgrowth of centuries; not one fell from the skies. Each had to be worked out bit by bit. Next come the monotheistic ideas: belief in one God, who is omnipotent and omniscient; the one God of the universe. This one God is extra-cosmic; he lives in the heavens. He is invested with the gross conceptions of his originators: he has a right side and a left side, and a bird in his hand, and so on and so forth. But one thing we find, that the tribal gods have disappeared for ever, and the one God of the universe has taken their place.

The God of gods. Still he is only an extra-cosmic God. He is unapproachable; nothing can come near him. But slowly this idea has changed also; and at the next stage we find a God immanent in nature.

In the New Testament it is taught, "*Our Father who art in heaven,*"—God living in the heavens separated from men. We are living on earth and he is living in Heaven. Further on we find the teaching that he is a God immanent in nature; he is not only God in heaven, but on earth too. He is the God in us. In the Hindu philosophy we find a stage of the same proximity of God to us. But we do not stop there. There is the non-dualistic stage, in which man realizes that the God he has been worshipping is not only the Father in heaven, and on earth, but that "*I and my Father are one.*" He realizes in his soul that he is God Himself, only a lower expression of Him. All that is real in me is He; all that is real in Him is I. The gulf between God and man is thus

bridged. Thus we find how by knowing God we find the kingdom of heaven within us.

In the first or dualistic stage, man knows he is a little personal soul, John, James or Tom, and he says, "I will be John, James or Tom to all eternity, and never anything else." As well might the murderer come along and say "*I will remain a murderer for ever.*" But as time goes on, Tom vanishes and goes back to the original pure Adam.

"Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God." Can we see God? Of course not. Can we know God? Of course not. If God can be known He will be God no longer. Knowledge is limitation. But I and my father are one: I find the reality in my soul. These ideas are expressed in some religions, and in others only hinted. In some they were expatriated. Christ's teachings are now very little understood in this country. If you will excuse me, I will say that they have never been very well understood.

The different stages of growth are absolutely necessary to the attainment of purity and perfection. The varying systems of religion are at bottom founded on the same ideas. Jesus says the kingdom of heaven is within you. Again he says, "*Our father who art in Heaven.*" How do you reconcile the two sayings? In this way. He was talking to the uneducated masses when he said the latter, the masses who were uneducated in religion. It was necessary to speak to them in their own language. The masses want concrete ideas, something the senses can grasp. A man may be the greatest philosopher in the world but a child in religion. When a man has developed a high state of spirituality he can understand that the kingdom of heaven is within him. That is the real kingdom of the mind. Thus we see that the apparent contradictions and perplexities in every religion mark but different stages of growth. And as such we have no right to blame any one for his religion. There

are stages of growth in which forms and symbols are necessary; they are the language that the souls in that stage can understand.

The next idea that I want to bring to you is that religion does not consist in doctrines or dogmas. It is not what you read nor what dogmas you believe that is of importance, but what you realize. "*Blessed are the pure in spirit for they shall see God*," yea, in this life. And that is salvation. There are those who teach that this can be gained by the mumbling of words. But no great Master ever taught that external forms were necessary for salvation. The power of attaining it is within ourselves. We live and move in God. Creeds and sects have their parts to play, but they are for children, they last but temporarily. Books never make religions, but religions make books. We must not forget that. No book ever created God, but God inspired all the great books. And no book ever created a soul. We must never forget that. The end of all

religions is the realizing of God in the soul. That is the one universal religion. If there is one universal truth in all religions, I place it here in realizing God. Ideas and methods may differ, but that is the central point. There may be a thousand different radii, but they all converge to the one centre, and that is the realization of God : something behind this world of sense, this world of eternal eating and drinking and talking nonsense, this world of false shadows and selfishness. There is that beyond all books, beyond all creeds, beyond the vanities of this world, and that is the realization of God within yourself. A man may believe in all the churches in the world, he may carry in his head all the sacred books ever written, he may baptize himself in all the rivers of the earth, still, if he has no perception of God, I would class him with the rankest atheist. And a man may have never entered a church or a mosque, nor performed any ceremony, but if he feels God within himself and is thereby lifted above

the vanities of the world, that man is a holy man, a saint, call him what you will. As soon as a man stands up and says he is right or his church is right, and all others are wrong, he is himself all wrong. He does not know that upon the proof of all the others depends the proof of his own. Love and charity for the whole human race, that is the test of true religiousness. I do not mean the sentimental statement that all men are brothers, but that one must feel the oneness of human life. So far as they are not exclusive, I see that the sects and creeds are all mine; they are all grand. They are all helping men towards the real religion. I will add, it is good to be born in a church, but it is bad to die there. It is good to be born a child, but bad to remain a child. Churches, ceremonies and symbols are good for children, but when the child is grown, he must burst the church or himself. We must not remain children for ever. It is like trying to fit one coat to all sizes and

growths. I do not deprecate the existence of sects in the world. Would to God there were twenty millions more, for the more there are, there will be a greater field for selection. What I do object to, is trying to fit one religion to every case. Though all religions are essentially the same they must have the varieties of form produced by dissimilar circumstances among different nations. We must each have our own individual religion, individual so far as the externals of it go.

Many years ago I visited a great sage of our own country, a very holy man. We talked of our revealed book, the Vedas, of your Bible, of the Koran, and of revealed books in general. At the close of our talk, this good man asked me to go to the table and take up a book; it was a book which among other things, contained a forecast of the rainfall during the year. The sage said, "Read that." And I read out the quantity of rain that was to fall. He said, "Now take the book and squeeze it." I did

so and he said, "Why, my boy, not a drop of water comes out. Until the water comes out, it is all book, book. So until your religion makes you realize God, it is useless. He who studies books only for religion reminds one of the fable of the ass which carried a heavy load of sugar on its back, but did not know the sweetness of it."

Shall we advise men to kneel down and cry: "O miserable sinners that we are!" No; rather let us remind them of their divine nature. I will tell you a story. A lioness in search of prey came upon a flock of sheep, and as she jumped at one of them, she gave birth to a cub and died on the spot. The young lion was brought up in the flock, ate grass and bleated like a sheep, and it never knew that it was a lion. One day a lion came across this flock and was astonished to see in it a huge lion eating grass and bleating like a sheep. At his sight the flock fled and the lion-sheep with them. But the lion watched his opportunity

and one day found the lion-sheep asleep. He woke him up and said: "You are a lion." The other said, "No," and began to bleat like a sheep. But the stranger lion took him to a lake and asked him to look in the water at his own image and see if it did not resemble him, the stranger lion. He looked and acknowledged that it did. Then the stranger lion began to roar and asked him to do the same. The lion-sheep tried his voice and was soon roaring as grandly as the other. And he was a sheep no longer.

My friends, I would like to tell you all that you are mighty as lions.

If the room is dark, do you go about beating your chest and crying, "It is dark! dark! dark!" No, the only way to get the light is to strike a light, and then the darkness goes. The only way to realize the light above you is to strike the spiritual light within you, and the darkness of sin and impurity will flee away. Think of your higher self, not of your lower.

What concerns us most is the religious thought—on soul and God and all that appertains to religion. We will take the Samhitas. These are collections of hymns forming, as it were, the oldest Aryan literature, properly speaking, the oldest literature in the world. There may have been some scraps of literature of older date here and there, older than that even, but not books, or literature properly so called. As a collected book this is the oldest the world has, and herein is portrayed the earliest feeling of the Aryans, their aspirations, the questions that arose about their manners and methods and so on. At the very outset we find a very curious idea. These hymns are sung in praise of different gods, devas as they are called, the bright ones. There is quite a number of them. One is called Indra, another Varuna, another Mitra, Parjanya, and so on. Various mythological and allegorical figures

come before us one after the other, for instance, Indra, the thunderer, striking the serpent who has withheld the rains from mankind. Then he lets fly his thunderbolt, the serpent is killed, and rain comes down in showers. The people are pleased and they worship Indra with oblations. They make a sacrificial pyre, kill some animals, roast their flesh upon spits and offer that meat to Indra. And they had a popular plant called Soma. What plant it was nobody knows now ; it has entirely disappeared, but from the books we gather that, when crushed, it produced a sort of milky juice, and that was fermented ; and it can also be gathered that this fermented Soma juice was intoxicating. This also they offered to Indra and the other gods, and they also drank it themselves. Sometimes they drank a little too much, and so did the gods. Indra on occasions got drunk. There are passages to show that Indra at one time drank so much of this Soma juice that he talked irrelevant words. So with Varuna. He is

another god, very powerful, and is in the same way protecting his votaries, and they are praising him with their libations of Soma. So is the god of war, and so on. But the popular idea that strikes one as making the mythologies of the Samhitas entirely different from the other mythologies, is that along with every one of these gods, is the idea of an infinity. This infinite is abstracted, and sometimes described as Aditya. At other times it is affixed as it were, to all the other gods. Take for example Indra. In some of the books you will find that Indra has a body, is very strong, sometimes is wearing golden armour, and comes down, lives and eats with his votaries, fights the demons, fights the snakes, and so on. Again, in one hymn we find that Indra has been given a very high position; he is omnipresent and omnipotent, and Indra sees the heart of every being. So with Varuna. This Varuna is god of the air, and is in charge of the water, just as Indra was previously; and then, all of a

sudden, we find him raised up and said to be omnipresent, omnipotent, and so on. I will read one passage about this Varuna in his highest form, and you will understand what I mean. It has been translated into English poetry, so it is better that I read it in that form.

"The mighty Lord on high our deeds, as if at hand, espies:
The gods know all men do, though men would fain their acts disguise;
Whoever stands, whoever moves, or steals from place to place,
Or hides him in his secret cell—the gods his movements trace.
Wherever two together plot, and deem they are alone,
King Varuna is there, a third, and all their schemes are known.
This earth is his, to him belong those vast and boundless skies;
Both seas within him rest, and yet in that small pool he lies.
Whoever far beyond the sky should think his way to wing,
He could not there elude the grasp of Varuna the King.
His spies, descending from the skies, glide all this world around;
Their thousand eyes all-scanning sweep to earth's remotest bound."

So we can multiply examples about the other gods; they all come, one after the other, to share the same fate—they first begin as gods, and then they are raised to his conception as the Being in whom the whole universe exists, who sees every heart, who is the ruler of the universe. And in the case of Varuna, there is another idea, just the germ of one idea

which came, but was immediately suppressed by the Aryan mind, and that was the idea of fear. In another place we read they are afraid they have sinned and ask Varuna for pardon. These ideas were never allowed, for reasons you will come to understand later on, to grow on Indian soil, but the germs were there sprouting, the idea of fear, and the idea of sin. This is the idea, as you all know, of what is called monotheism. This monotheism, we see, came to India at a very early period. Throughout the Samhitas, in the first and oldest part, this monotheistic idea prevails, but we shall find that it did not prove sufficient for the Aryans; they threw it aside, as it were, as a very primitive sort of idea and went further on, as we Hindus think. Of course in reading books and criticisms on the Vedas written by Europeans, the Hindu cannot help smiling when he reads, that the writings of our authors are saturated with this previous education alone. Persons who have sucked in as their mother's milk the

idea that the highest ideal of God is the idea of a personal God, naturally dare not think on the lines of these ancient thinkers of India, when they find that just after the Samhitas, the monotheistic idea with which the Samhita portion is replete, was thought by the Aryans to be useless and not worthy of philosophers and thinkers, and that they struggled hard for a more philosophical and transcendental idea. The monotheistic idea was much too human for them, although they gave it such descriptions as "the whole universe ruts in him," and "Thou art the keeper of all hearts." The Hindus were bold, to their great credit be it said, bold thinkers in all their ideas, so bold that one spark of their thought frightens the so-called bold thinkers of the West. Well has it been said by Prof. Max Müller about these thinkers, that they climbed up to heights where their lungs only could breathe, and where those of other beings would have burst. These brave people followed

reason wherever it led them, no matter at what cost, never caring if all their best superstitions were smashed to pieces, never caring what society would think about them, or talk about them, but what they thought was right and true, they preached and they talked.

Before going into all these speculations of the ancient Vedic sages, we will first refer to one or two very curious instances in the Vedas. The peculiar fact that these gods are taken up, as it were, one after the other, raised and sublimated, till each has assumed the proportions of the infinite, personal God of the Universe, calls for an explanation. Prof. Max Müller creates for it a new name, as he thinks it peculiar to the Hindus; he calls it "Henotheism." We need not go far for the explanation. It is within the book. A few steps from the very place where we find those gods being raised and sublimated, we find the explanation also. The question arises how the Hindu mythologies should be so unique, so different

from all others? In Babylonian or Greek mythologies we find one god struggling upwards, and he assumes a position and remains there, while the other gods die out. Of all the Molochs, Jehovah becomes supreme, and the other Molochs are forgotten, lost for ever; he is the God of gods. So too, of all the Greek gods, Zeus comes to the front and assumes big proportions, becomes the God of the Universe, and all the other gods become degraded into minor angels. This fact was repeated in latter times. The Buddhists and the Jains raised one of their prophets to the Godhead, and all the other gods they made subservient to Buddha, or to Jina. This is the world-wide process, but there we find an exception, as it were. One god is praised, and for the time being it is said that all the other gods obey his commands, and the very one who is said to be raised up by Varuna, is himself raised up, in the next book, to the highest position. They occupy the position of the personal God in turns. But the

explanation is there in the book, and it is a grand explanation, one that has given the theme to all subsequent thought in India, and one that will be the theme of the whole world of religions :—*Ekam sat viprâ bahudhâ vadanti.* "That which exists is One: sages call It by various names." In all these cases where hymns were written about all these gods, the Being perceived was one and the same; it was the preceiver who made the difference. It was the hymnist, the sage, the poet, who sang in different languages and different words, the praise of one and the same Being. "That which exists is One: sages call It by various names." Tremendous results have followed from that one verse. Some of you, perhaps, are surprised to think that India is the only country where there never has been a religious persecution, where never was any man disturbed for his religious faith. Theists or atheists, monists, dualists, monotheists, are there, and always live unmolested. Materialists were

allowed to preach from the steps of Brahmanical temples, against the gods, and against God Himself; they went preaching all over the land that the idea of God was a mere superstition, and that gods, and Vedas, and religion were simply superstitions invented by the priests for their own benefit, and they were allowed to do this unmolested. And so, wherever he went, the Buddha tried to pull down every old thing sacred to the Hindus, to the dust, and Buddha died of ripe old age. So did the Jains, who laughed at the idea of God. "How can it be that there is a God?" they asked; "it must be a mere superstition." So on, endless examples there are. Before the Mohammedan wave came into India, it was never known what religious persecution was; the Hindus had only experienced it as made by foreigners on themselves. And even now it is a patent fact how much Hindus have helped to build Christian churches, and how much readiness there is to help them. There never has been bloodshed.

Even heterodox religions that have come out of India have been likewise affected; for instance, Buddhism. Buddhism is a great religion in some respects, but to confuse Buddhism with Vedanta is without meaning; any one may mark just the difference that exists between Christianity and the Salvation Army. There are great and good points in Buddhism, but these great points fell into hands which were not able to keep them safe. The jewels which came from philosophers fell into the hands of mobs, and the mobs took up their ideas. They had a great deal of enthusiasm, some marvellous ideas, great and humanitarian ideas, but, after all, there is something else that is necessary,—thought and intellect,—to keep everything safe. Wherever you see the most humanitarian ideas fall into the hands of the multitude, the first result, you may notice, is degradation. It is learning and intellect that keep things sure. Now this Buddhism went as the first missionary religion to the world, penetrated the whole of

the civilised world as it existed at that time, and never was a drop of blood shed for that religion. We read how in China the Buddhist missionaries were persecuted, and thousands were massacred by two or three successive emperors, but after that, fortune favored the Buddhists, and one of the emperors offered to take vengeance on the persecutors, but the missionaries refused. All that, we owe to this one verse. That is why I want you to remember it. "Whom they call Indra, Mitra, Varuna— that which exists is One: sages call It by various names."

It was written, nobody knows at what date, it may be 8,000 years ago, in spite of all modern scholars may say; it may be 9,000 years ago. Not one of these religious speculations is of modern date, but they are as fresh to-day as they were when they were written, or rather, fresher, for at that distant date man was not so civilised as we know him now; he had not learnt to cut his brother's throat because

he differed a little in thought from himself; he had not deluged the world in blood, he did not become demon to his own brother. In the name of humanity he did not massacre whole lots of mankind then. Therefore these words come to us to-day very fresh, as great, stimulating, life-giving words, much fresher than they were when they were written, "that which exists is One: sages call It by various names." We have to learn yet that all religions, under whatever name they may be called, either Hindu, Buddhist, Mohamedan or Christian, have the same God, and he who derides any one of these derides his own God.

That was the solution they arrived at. But, as I have said, this ancient monotheistic idea did not satisfy the Hindu mind; it did not go far enough; it did not explain the visible world; a ruler of the world does not explain the world, certainly not. A ruler of the universe does not explain the universe, and much less an external ruler, one outside of it. He may be a moral

guide, the greatest power in the universe, but that is no explanation of the universe; and the first question that we find now arising, assuming proportions, is the question about the universe. "Whence it came?" "How it came?" "How it exists?" Various hymns are to be found on this question, struggling forward to assume form, and nowhere do we find it so poetically, so wonderfully expressed as in the following hymn:

"Then there was neither aught nor naught, nor air, nor sky, nor anything. What covered all? Where rested all? Then death was not, nor deathlessness, nor change to night and day." The translation loses a good deal of the poetical beauty. "Then death was not, nor deathlessness, nor change to night and day;" the very sound of the Sanskrit is musical. "*That* existed, that breath, covering, as it were, that God's existence, but it did not begin to move." It is good to remember this one idea, that it existed, motionless, because we shall

find how this idea sprouts up afterwards in the cosmology, how according to the Hindu metaphysics and philosophy, this whole universe is a mass of vibrations, as it were, motion; and there are periods when this whole mass of motion subsides and becomes finer and finer, remaining in that state for some time. That is the state described in this hymn. It existed unmoved, without vibration, and when this creation began, this began to vibrate and all this creation came out of it, that one breath, calm, self-sustained, naught else beyond it.

"Gloom existed first." Those of you who have ever been in India or any tropical country, and have seen the bursting of the monsoon, will understand the majesty of these words. I remember three poets' attempts to picture this. Milton says, "No light, but rather darkness visible." Kalidas says, "Darkness which can be penetrated with a needle," but none comes near this Vedic description, "Gloom hidden in gloom." Everything is parching and sizzling,

the whole creation seems to be burning away, and for days it has been so, when one afternoon there is in one corner of the horizon a speck of cloud, and in less than half an hour it has extended unto the whole earth, until as it were, it is covered with cloud, cloud over cloud, and then it bursts into a tremendous deluge of rain. The cause of creation was described, as will. That which existed at first had become changed into will, and this will begin to manifest itself, as desire. This also we ought to remember, because we find that this idea of desire is said to be the cause of all we have. This idea of will has been the corner-stone of both the Buddhist and the Vedantic systems, and later on, has penetrated into German philosophy, and forms the basis of Schopenhauer's system of philosophy. It is here we first hear of it.

"Now first arose desire, the primal seed of mind.
Sages, searching in their hearts by wisdom, found the bond
Between existence and non-existence."

It is a very peculiar expression; the poet ends by saying that "perhaps He even does

not know." We find in this hymn, apart from its poetical merits, that this questioning about the universe has assumed quite definite proportions, and that the minds of these sages must have advanced to such a state, when all sorts of common answers would not satisfy them. We find that they were not even satisfied with this Governor above. There are various other hymns where the same idea comes in, about how this all came, and just as we have seen, when they were trying to find a Governor of the universe, a personal God, either they were taking up one Deva after another, raising him up to that position, so now we shall find, that in various hymns one or other *idea* is taken up, and expanded infinitely and made responsible for everything in the universe. One particular idea is taken as the support, in which everything rests and exists, and that support has become all this. So on, with various ideas they tried this method. With *Prana*, the life principle, they expanded the idea of the life

principle until it became universal and infinite. It is the life principle that is supporting everything; not only the human body, but it is the light of the sun and the moon, it is the power moving everything, the universal motive energy. Some of these attempts are very beautiful, very poetical. Some of them, as, "He ushers the beautiful morning," are marvelouslly lyrical in the way they picture things. Then this very desire, which, as we have just read, arose as the first primal germ of creation, began to be stretched out, until it became the universal God. But none of these ideas satisfied.

Here the idea is sublimated and finally abstracted into a personality. "He alone existed in the beginning; He is the one Lord of all that exists; He supports this universe; He who is the author of souls, He who is the author of strength, whom all the gods worship, whose shadow is life, whose shadow is death; whom else shall we worship? Whose glory the snow tops of the Himalayas declare, whose

glory the oceans with all their waters proclaim."
So on it goes, but, as I told you just now, this idea did not satisfy them.

At last we find a very peculiar position. The Aryan mind had so long been seeking an answer to the question from outside. They questioned every thing they could find, the sun, moon and stars, and they found all they could in this way. The whole of Nature at best could teach them only of a personal Being who is the Ruler of the universe; it could teach nothing further. In short, out of the external world we can only get the idea of an architect, that which is called the Design Theory. It is not a very logical argument, as we all know; there is something childish about it, yet it is the only little bit of anything we can know about God from the external world, that this world required a builder. But this is no explanation of the universe. The materials of this world were before him, and this God wanted all these materials, and the worst objection is

that he must be limited by the materials. The builder could not have made a house without the materials of which it is composed. Therefore he was limited by the materials; he could only do what the materials enabled him to. Therefore the God that the Design Theory gives, is at best only an architect, and a limited architect of the universe; he is bound and restricted by the materials; he is not independent at all. That much they had found out already, and many other minds would have rested at that. In other countries the same thing happened; the human mind could not rest there; the thinking, grasping minds wanted to go further, but those that were backward got hold of them and did not allow them to grow. But fortunately these Hindu sages were not the people to be knocked on the head; they wanted to get a solution, and now we find that they were leaving the external for the internal. The first thing that struck them was, that it is not with the eyes and the senses that we perceive

the external world, and know anything about religion; the first idea, therefore, was to find the deficiency, and that deficiency was both physical and moral, as we shall see. You do not know, says one of these sages, the cause of this universe; there has arisen a tremendous difference between you and me: why? Because you have been talking sense things and are satisfied with sense objects and with the mere ceremonials of religion. While I have known the *Purusha* beyond.

Along with this progress of spiritual ideas that I am trying to trace for you, I can only hint to you a little about the other factor in the growth, for that has nothing to do with our subject, therefore I need not enlarge upon it —the growth of rituals. As those spiritual ideas progressed in arithmetical progression, so the ritualistic ideas progressed in geometrical progression. The old superstitions had by this time developed into a tremendous mass of rituals, which grew and grew till it almost killed

the Hindu life; and it is still there, it has got hold of, and permeated every portion of our life and made us born slaves. Yet, at the same time, we find a fight against this advance of ritual from the very earliest days. The one objection raised there, is this, that love for ceremonials, dressing at certain times, eating in a certain way, and shows and mummeries of religion like these, are only external religion, because you are satisfied with the senses and do not want to go beyond them. This is a tremendous difficulty with us, with every human being. At best when we want to hear of spiritual things our standard is the senses; or a man hears things about philosophy, and God, and transcendental things, and after hearing about them for days, he asks, after all, how much money will they bring, how much sense enjoyment will they bring; for his enjoyment is only in the senses, quite naturally. But that satisfaction in the, senses, says our sage, is one of the causes which have spread the veil between truth and

ourselves. Devotion to ceremonials, satisfaction in the senses, and forming various theories, have drawn a veil between ourselves and truth. This is another great land-mark, and we shall have to trace this ideal to the end, and see how it developed later on into that wonderful theory of *Maya*, of the Vedanta, how this veil will be the real explanation of the Vedanta, how the truth was there all the time: it was only this veil that had covered it.

Thus we find that the minds of these ancient Aryan thinkers had begun a new theme. They found out that in the external world no search would give an answer to their question. They might seek in the external world for ages, but there would be no answer to their questions. So they fell back upon this other method, and according to this, they were taught that these desires of the senses, desires for ceremonials, and externalities, have caused a veil to come between themselves and the truth, and that this cannot be removed by any ceremonial.

They had to fall back on their own minds, and analyse the mind to find the truth in themselves. The outside world failed and they turned back upon the inside world, and then it became the real philosophy of the Vedanta; from here the Vedanta philosophy begins. It is the foundation-stone of Vedanta philosophy. As we go on we find that all its inquiries are inside. From the very outset they seemed to declare,—look not for the truth in any religion; it is here in the human soul, the miracle of all miracles, in the human soul, the emporium of all knowledge, the mine of all existence—seek here. What is not here cannot be there. And they found out step by step that that which is external is but a dull reflection at best of that which is inside. We shall see how they took, as it were, this old idea of God, the Governor of the universe, who is external to the universe, and first put Him inside the universe. He is not a God outside, but He is inside; and they took Him from there into their own hearts. Here He is, in the

heart of man, the Soul of our souls, the Reality in us.

Several great ideas have to be understood, in order to grasp properly the workings of the Vedanta philosophy. In the first place it is not philosophy in the sense we speak of philosophy of Kant and Hegel. It is not one book, or the work of one man. Vedanta is the name of a series of books written at different times. Sometimes in one of these productions there will be fifty different things. Neither are they properly arranged; the thoughts, as it were, have been jotted down. Sometimes in the midst of other extraneous things, we find some wonderful idea. But one fact is remarkable, that these ideas in the Upanishads would be always progressing. In that crude old language, the working of the mind of every one of the sages has been, as it were, painted just as it went; how the ideas are at first very crude, and they become finer and finer till they reach the goal of the Vedanta, and this goal assumes a philosophical name. Just

at first it was a search after the Devas, the bright ones, and then it was the origin of the universe, and the very same search is getting another name more philosophical, clearer—the unity of all things "Knowing whom everything else becomes known."

THE HINDU RELIGION.

It was the voice of the ancient Rishis of the Vedas, speaking sweet words of love and toleration through the Hindu monk, Paramahamsa Swami Vivekananda, that held spell-bound recently every one of those many hundreds who had accepted the invitation of the Brooklyn Ethical Society and packed the large lecture hall and the adjoining rooms of the Pouch Gallery on Clinton Avenue to overflowing (on the 30th December 1894.)

The fame of the Oriental ascetic, who came to this Western world as the emissary and representative of the most ancient form of philosophical religious worship, Hinduism, had preceded him and as a result, men of all professions and callings—doctors and lawyers and judges and teachers—together with many ladies, had come from all parts of the city to listen to his strangely beautiful and eloquent defence of the Religion of India. They had heard of

him as the delegate of the worshippers of Krishna and Brahma and Buddha to the "*Parliament of Religions*" at the World's Fair in Chicago, where he had been the most honoured of all pagan representatives; they had read of him as the philosopher who, for the sake of his religion, had given up what promised to be a most brilliant career, who, by years of ardent and patient study, had taken the scientific culture of the West and had transplanted it to the mystic soil of the ancient tradition of the Hindus; they had heard of his culture and his learning, of his wit and his eloquence, of his purity and sincerity and holiness, and hence they expected great things.

And they were not disappointed. Swami (i. e., Master or Rabbi or Teacher) Vivekananda is even greater than his fame. As he stood upon the *dais* in his picturesque kaftan of bright red, a stray curl of jet-black hair creeping from under the many folds of his orange turban, his swarthy face reflecting the

brilliancy of his thoughts, his large expressive eyes, bright with the enthusiasm of a prophet, and his mobile mouth uttering, in deep melodious tones and in almost perfect English, only words of love and sympathy and toleration; he was a splendid type of the famous sages of the Himalayas, a prophet of a new religion combining the morality of the Christians with the philosophy of the Buddhists, and his hearers understood why on Sept. 5, 1894, a crowded mass meeting at Calcutta was held for the sole purpose of "publicly recording the grateful appreciation of his countrymen for his great services rendered to the cause of Hinduism."

Whatever else may be said of the Swami's lecture or address (for it was spoken extemporaneously), it was certainly intensely interesting After thanking the audience cordially for the hearty reception it had given him after his introduction by Dr. Lewis G. Janes, the President of the Ethical Association, Swami Vivekananda said in part :—

My religion is to learn. I read my Bible better in the light of your Bible and the dark prophecies of my religion become brighter when compared with those of your prophets. Truth has always been universal. If I alone were to have six fingers on my hand while all of you had only five, you would not think that my hand was the true intent of Nature but rather that it was abnormal and diseased. Just so with religion. If one creed alone were to be true and all the others untrue, you would have a right to say that that religion was diseased; if one religion is true, all the others must be true. Thus the Hindu religion is your property as well as mine. Of the two hundred and ninety millions of people inhabiting India, only two millions are Christians, sixty millions Mohammedan and all the rest are Hindus.

The Hindus found their creed upon the ancient Vedas, a word derived from *Vid*, 'to know.' These are a series of books, which to our minds, contain the essence of all religions;

but we do not think they alone contain the truths. They teach us the immortality of the soul. In every country and every human breast there is a natural desire to find a stable equilibrium—something that does not change. We cannot find it in Nature, for all the universe is nothing but an infinite mass of changes.

But, to infer from that, that nothing unchanging exists, is to fall into the error of the southern school of Buddhists, and the Charvakas, which latter believe that all is matter and nothing mind, that all religion is a cheat, and morality and goodness useless superstitions. The Vedanta philosophy teaches that man is not bound by his five senses. They only know the present, and neither the future nor the past; but as the present signifies both past and future, and all three are only demarcations of time, then also the present would be unknown, if it were not for something above the senses, something independent of time, which unifies the past and the future in the present.

But what is independent? Not our body, for it depends upon outward conditions; nor our mind because the thoughts of which it is composed are caused. It is our soul. The Vedas say the whole world is a mixture of independence and dependence, of freedom and slavery, but through it all shines the soul independent, immortal, pure, perfect, holy. For, if it is independent, it cannot perish, as death is but a change, and depends upon conditions; if independent, it must be perfect for imperfection is again but a condition, and therefore dependent. And this immortal and perfect soul must be the same in the highest God as well as the humblest man, the difference between them being only in the degree in which this sou manifests itself.

But why should the soul take to itself a body? For the same reason that I take a looking glass,—to see myself. Thus, in the body, the soul is reflected. The soul is God, and every human being has a perfect divinity

within himself, and each one must show his divinity sooner or later. If I am in a dark room, no amount of protestation will make it any lighter—I must light a match. Just so, no amount of grumbling and wailing make our imperfect body more perfect; but the Vedanta teaches: Call forth your soul—show your divinity. Teach your children that they are divine, that a religion is a positive something and not a negative nonsense; that it is not subjection to groans when under oppression, but expansion and manifestation.

Every religion has it that man's present and future are modified by the past, and that the present is but the effect of the past. How is it, then, that every child is born with an experience that cannot be accounted for by hereditary transmission? How is it that one is born of good parents, receives a good education and becomes a good man, while another comes from besotted parents and ends on the gallows? How do you explain this inequality, without

implicating God? Why should a merciful Father set his child in such conditions which must bring forth misery? It is no explanation to say God will make amends later on—God has no blood-money. Then too what becomes of my liberty, if this be my first birth? Coming into this world without experience of a former life my independence would be gone, for my path would be marked out by the experience of others. If I cannot be the maker of my own fortune, then I am not free. I take upon myself the blame for the misery of this existence, and say I will unmake the evil I have done in another existence. This, then, is our philosophy of the migration of the soul. We come into this life with the experience of another and the fortune or misfortune of this existence is the result of our acts in a former existence, always becoming better, till at last perfection is reached.

We believe in a God, the Father of the universe, infinite and omnipotent. But if our soul at last becomes perfect, it also must

become infinite. But there is no room for two infinite unconditional beings, and hence we believe in a personal God, and we ourselves are He. These are the three stages which every religion has taken. First we see God in the far beyond, then we come nearer to Him and give Him omnipresence, so that we live in Him; and of an at last we recognize that we are He. The idea objective God is not untrue—in fact every idea and hence every religion of God is true, as each is but a different stage in the journey, the aim of which is the perfect conception of the Vedas. Hence too, we not only tolerate, but we Hindus accept every religion, praying in the mosque of the Mohammedans, worshipping before the fire of the Zoroastrians, and kneeling cross of the Christians, knowing that all the before the religions, from the lowest fetichism to the highest absolutism, mean so many attempts of the human soul to grasp and realize the infinite, each determined by the conditions of its birth and association, and each of them

marking a stage of progress. We gather these flowers all and bind them with the twine of love, making a wonderful bouquet of worship.

If I am God, then my soul is a temple of the Highest, and my every motion should be a worship. Love for love's sake, duty for duty's sake, without hope of reward or fear of punishment. Thus my religion means expansion, and expansion means realization and perception in the highest sense—no mumbling words or genuflections. Man is to become divine, realizing the divine more and more from day to day in an endless progress.

The speaker was frequently and heartily applauded. At the end of his lecture he devoted some fifteen minutes to answering questions, after which he held an informal reception.—*The Brooklyn Standard.*

VEDANTA PHILOSOPHY
AT THE HARVARD UNIVERSITY.

(A LECTURE AND DISCUSSION)

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.



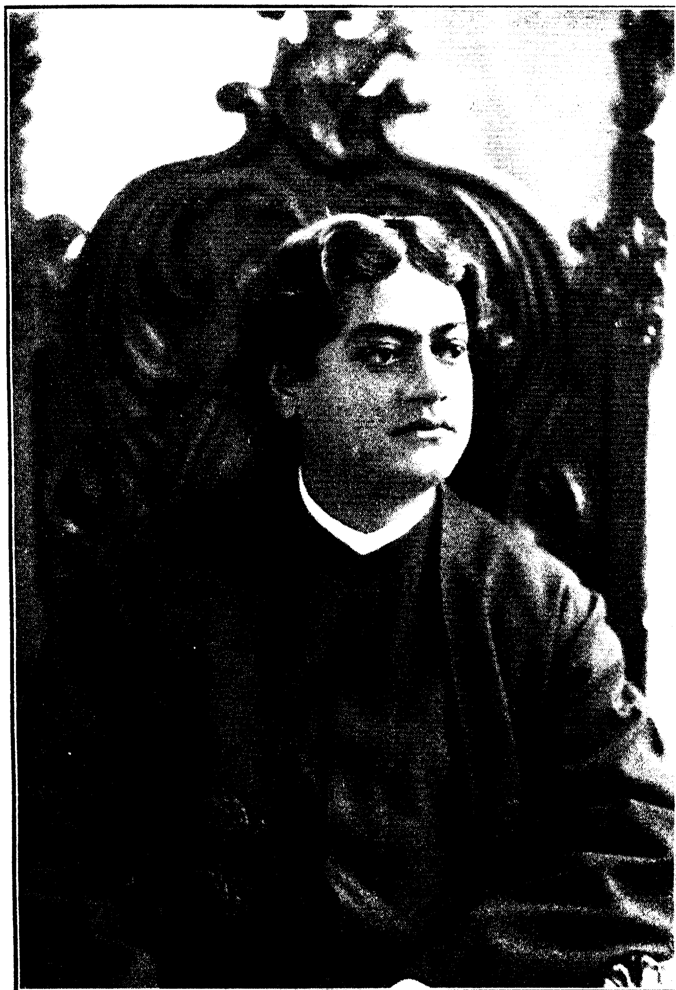
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PUBLISHER'S PREFACE.

This lecture was delivered by the Swamiji, on the 25th March, 1896, at the Graduate Philosophical Society, before the professors and graduates of the University of Harvard, near Boston, U. S. A. The lecture and the discussion that followed it, were published in America by Mr. J. P. Fox with a note by himself and an introduction by Dr. C. C. Everett, Principal of the Harvard University. The present publication is only a revised form of this American edition. For the "Answers and Selections," with which this book concludes, we are also indebted to the American publisher, who as will be seen, has explained in his note, how he compiled them.



INTRODUCTION.



The Swami Vivekananda was sent by his friends and co-religionists to present their belief at the Congress of Religions that was held in connection with the World's Fair in Chicago. This he did in a way to win general interest and admiration. Since then he has lectured on the same theme in different parts of our country. He has been in fact a missionary from India to America. Everywhere he has made warm personal friends; and his expositions of Hindu philosophy have been listened to with delight. It is very pleasant to observe the eager interest with which his own people in India follow his course, and the joy that they take in his success. I have seen a pamphlet filled with speeches made at a large and influential meeting in Calcutta, which was called together to express enthusiastic approval of the manner in which he has fulfilled his mission; and satisfaction at this invasion of the West by oriental thought. This satisfaction is well grounded. We may not be so near to actual conversion as some of these

speakers seem to believe ; but Vivekananda has created a high degree of interest in himself and his work. There are indeed few departments of study more attractive than the Hindu thought. It is a rare pleasure to see a form of belief that to most seems so far away and unreal as the Vedanta system, represented by an actually living and extremely intelligent believer. This system is not to be regarded merely as a curiosity, as a speculative vagary. Hegel said that Spinozism is the necessary beginning of all philosophizing. This can be said even more emphatically of the Vedanta system. We occidentals busy ourselves with the manifold. We can, however, have no understanding of the manifold, if we have no sense of the One in which the manifold exists. The reality of the One is the truth which the East may well teach us ; and we owe a debt of gratitude to Vivekananda that he has taught this lesson so effectively.

Harvard University. C. C. EVERETT

NOTE.

THIS lecture and the discussion which followed were stenographically reported. They could receive from the Swami only a cursory revision, owing to his departure for England; but it is hoped no errors have crept in. Professor LANMAN and professor WRIGHT of Harvard have kindly assisted in the final revision. In the reporting of the discussion, some of the questions were unavoidably lost. The first four notes were added by the Swami. In the original lecture, the quotations from Hindu writings were first given in the Sanskrit, and then translated; these off-hand translations stand as given.

Following the lecture and discussion, are the answers of the Swami to questions at two afternoon talks with some Harvard students, on March 22 and 24. These answers were stenographically reported, but the questions were not. There have also been added a few selections from unpublished lectures. Some of the answers and selections

cover the same general ground, but they have all been retained on account of the variety in treatment.

While no adequate exposition of the Vedanta philosophy can be given in a single address, it is hoped that this, with the accompanying answers and selections, will be of value to those interested in the thought and life of the East.

J. P. F.

THE VEDANTA PHILOSOPHY.

THE Vedanta philosophy, as it is generally called at the present day, really comprises all the various sects that now exist in India. Thus there have been various interpretations, and to my mind they have been progressive, beginning with the dualistic or Dwaita and ending with the non-dualistic or Adwaita. The word *Vedanta* literally means the end of the Vedas,—the Vedas being the scriptures of the Hindus.[1] Sometimes in the West by the Vedas are meant only the hymns and rituals of the

1 The Vedas are divided mainly into two portions: the Karmakanda and the Jnanakanda,—the work-portion and the knowledge-portion. To the Karmakanda belong the famous hymns and the rituals or Brahmanas Those books which treat of spiritual matters apart from ceremonials are called Upanishads. The Upanishads belong to the Jnana kanda, or knowledge-portion. It is not that all the Upanishads came to be composed as a separate portion of the Vedas. Some are interspersed among the rituals, and at least one is in the Sanhita or hymn-portion. Sometimes the term *Upanishad* is applied to books which are not included in the Vedas,—e. g. the Gita ; but as a rule it is applied to the philosophical treatises scattered through the Vedas. These treatises have been collected, and are called the Vedanta.

Vedas. But at the present time these parts have almost gone out of use, and usually by the word *Vedas* in India the Vedanta is meant. All our commentators, when they want to quote a passage from the scriptures, as a rule quote from the Vedanta, which has another technical name with the commentators—the Srutis.[1] Now all the books known by the name of the Vedanta were not entirely written after the ritualistic portions of the Vedas. For instance, one of them—the Isa Upanishad—forms the fortieth chapter of the Yajur Veda, that being the oldest part of the Vedas. There are other Upanishads[2] which form portions of the Brahmanas or ritualistic writings; and

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1 The term *Sruti*,—meaning "that which is heard,"—though including the whole of the Vedic literature, is chiefly applied by the commentators to the Upanishads.

2 The Upanishads are said to be one hundred and eight in number. Their dates cannot be fixed with certainty,—only it is certain that they are older than the Buddhistic movement. Though some of the minor Upanishads contain allusions indicating a later date, yet that does not prove the later date of the treatise, as, in very many cases in Sanskrit literature, the substance of a book, though of very ancient date, receives a coating, as it were, of later events in the hands of he sectarians to exalt their particular sect.

the rest of the Upanishads are independent, not çomprised in any of the Brahmanas or other parts of the Vedas ; but there is no reason to suppose that they were entirely independent of other parts, for, as we well know, many of these have been lost entirely, and many of the Brahmanas have become extinct. So it is quite possible that the independent Upanishads belonged to some Brahmanas which in course of time fell into disuse, while the Upanishads remained. These Upanishads are also called Forest Books or Aranyakas.

The Vedanta, then, practically forms the scriptures of the Hindus, and all systems of philosophy that are orthodox have to take it as their foundation. Even the Buddhists and Jains, when it suits their purpose, will quote a passage from the Vedanta as authority. All schools of philosophy in India, although they claim to have been based upon the Vedas, took different names for their systems. The last one, the system of Vyasa, took its stand upon the doctrines of the Vedas more than the previous systems did, and made an attempt to harmonize

the preceding philosophies, such as the Sankhya and the Nyaya, with the doctrines of the Vedanta. So it is especially called the Vedanta Philosophy ; and the Sutras or Aphorisms of Vyasa are, in modern India, the basis of the Vedanta Philosophy. Again, these Sutras of Vyasa have been variously explained by different commentators. In general there are three sorts of commentators[1] in India now ; and from their inter-

1 The commentaries are of various sorts,—such as the Bhashya, Tika, Tippani, Churni, etc,—of which all except the Bhashya are explanations of the text or difficult words in the text. The Bhashya is not properly a commentary, but the elucidation of a system of philosophy out of texts, the object being not to explain the words, but to bring out a philosophy. So the writer of a Bhashya expands his own system, taking texts as authorities for his system.

There have been various commentaries on the Vedanta Its doctrines found their final expression in the philosophical Aphorisms of Vyasa. This treatise, called the Uttara Mimansa, is the standard authority of Vedantism,—nay, is the most authoritative exposition of the Hindu scriptures. The most antagonistic sects have been compelled, as it were, to take up the texts of Vyasa, and harmonize them with their own philosophy. Even in very ancient times, the commentators on the Vedanta philosophy formed themselves into the three celebrated Hindu sects of dualists, qualified non-dualists, and non-dualists. The ancient commentaries are perhaps lost ; but they have been revived

pretations have arisen three systems of philosophy and sects. One is the dualistic or Dwaita ; a second is the qualified non-dualistic or Visishtadwaita ; and a third is the non-dualistic or Adwaita. Of these the dualistic and the qualified non-dualistic include the largest number of the Indian people. The non-dualists are comparatively few in number. Now I will try to lay before you the ideas that are contained in all these three sects ; but before going on, I will make one remark,—that these different Vedanta systems have one common psychology, and that is the psychology of the Sankhya system. This Sankhya psychology is very much like the psychologies of the Nyaya and Vaiseshika systems, differing only in minor particulars.

All the Vedantists agree on three points. They believe in God, in the Vedas as re-

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in modern times by the post-Buddhistic commentators Sankara, Ramanuja, and Madhva. Sankara revived the non-dualistic form, Ramanuja the qualified non-dualistic form of the ancient commentator Bodhayana, and Madhva the the dualistic form. In India the sects differ mainly in their philosophy ; the difference in rituals is slight, philosophy and religion being the same.

vealed, and in cycles. We have already considered the Vedas. The belief about cycles is as follows : All matter throughout the universe is the outcome of one primal matter called Akasa ; and all force, whether gravitation, attraction or repulsion, or life is the outcome of one primal force called Prana. Prana acting on Akasa is creating or projecting[1] the universe. At the beginning of a cycle, Akasa is motionless, unmanifested. Then Prana begins to act, more and more, creating grosser and grosser forms out of Akasa,—plants, animals, men, stars, and so on. After an incalculable time this evolution ceases and involution begins, everything being resolved back through finer and finer forms into the original Akasa and Prana, when a new cycle follows. Now there is something beyond Akasa and Prana. Both can be resolved into a third thing called Mahat,—the cosmic mind. This cos-

1 The word which is "creation" in your language is in Sanskrit exactly "projection," because there is no sect in India which believes in creation as it is regarded in the West,—a something coming out of nothing . . . What we mean by creation is projection of that which already existed. (The Atman, Swamiji's Lecture on.)

mic mind does not create Akasa and Prana, but changes itself into them.

We will now take up the beliefs about mind, soul, and God. According to the universally accepted Sankhya psychology, in perception,—in the case of vision, for instance,—there are, first of all, the instruments or Karanas of vision,—the eyes. Behind the instruments—the eyes is the organ of vision or Indriya, the optic nerve and its centres,—which is not the external instrument, but without which the eyes will not see. More still is needed for perception. The mind or Manas must come and attach itself to the organ. And besides this, the sensation must be carried to the intellect or Buddhi,—the determinative, reactive state of the mind. When the reaction comes from Buddhi, along with it flashes the external world and egoism. Here then is the will; but everything is not complete. Just as every picture, being composed of successive impulses of light, must be united on something stationary to form a whole, so all the ideas in the mind must be gathered and projected on something that is stationary—

relatively to the body and mind,—that is, on what is called the soul or Purusha or Atman.

According to the Sankhya philosophy, the reactive state of the mind called Buddhi or intellect is the outcome, the change, or a certain manifestation of the Mahat or cosmic mind. The Mahat becomes changed into vibrating thought ; and that becomes in one part changed into the organs, and in the other part into Akasa and Prana. Out of the combination of all these, the whole of this universe, from Mahat down to the grossest objects, is produced. Behind even Mahat, the Sankhya conceives of a certain state which is called Avyaktam or unmanifested, where even the manifestation of mind is not present, but only the causes exist. It is also called Prakriti. Beyond this Prakriti, and eternally separate from it, is the Purusha, the soul of the Sankhya, which is without attributes and omnipresent. The Purusha, is not the doer but the witness. The illustration of the crystal is used to explain the Purusha. The latter is said to be like a crystal without any color, before which diff-

-erent colors are placed, and then it seems to be colored by all the colors before it, but in reality it is not. The Vedantists reject the Sankhya ideas of the soul (Purusha) and nature (Prakriti). They claim that between them there is a huge gulf to be bridged over. On the one hand the Sankhya system comes to nature, and then at once it has to jump over to the other side and come to the soul which is entirely separate from nature. How can these different colors, as the Sankhya calls them, be able to act on that soul which by its nature is colorless ? So the Vedantists from the very first, affirm that this soul and this nature are one.[1] Even the dualistic Vedantists admit that the Atman or God is not only the efficient cause of this universe but also the material cause. But they only

1 The Vedantist and the Sankhya philosophy are very little opposed to each other. The Vedantists' God developed out of the Sankhya's Purusha. All the systems take up the psychology of the Sankhya. Both the Vedanta and the Sankhya believe in the infinite soul, only the Sankhya believes there are many souls. According to the Sankhya, this universe does not require any explanation from outside. The Vedantist believes, there is the one Soul, which appears as many ; and we build on the Sankhya's analysis. (Talk of March 24, 1896).

say so in so many words. They do not really mean it, for they try to escape from their conclusions in this way. They say there are three existences in this universe,—God, soul and nature. Nature and soul are, as it were, the body of God, and in this sense it may be said that God and the whole universe are one. But this nature and all these various souls remain different from each other through all eternity. Only at the beginning of a cycle do they become manifest; and when the cycle ends they become fine, and remain in a fine state. The Adwaita Vedantists—the non-dualists—reject this theory of the soul, and, having nearly the whole range of the Upanishads in their favour, build their philosophy entirely upon them. All the books contained in the Upanishads have one subject, one task before them,—to prove the following theme: "Just as by the knowledge of one lump of clay we have the knowledge of all the clay in the universe, so what is that, knowing which we know everything in the universe?"[1]

1 Compare Chandogya, Propataka VI, 1—4: and Mundaka, I, 3.

The idea of the Adwaitists is to generalize the whole universe into one,—that something which is really the whole of this universe. And they claim that this whole universe is one, that it is one Being manifesting itself in all these various forms. They admit that what the Sankhya calls nature exists, but say—that nature is God. It is this Being, the Sat, which has become converted into all this,—the universe, men, soul, and everything that exists. Mind and Mahat are but the manifestations of that one Sat. But then the difficulty arises that this would be pantheism. How came that Sat which is unchangeable, as they admit (for that which is absolute is unchangeable), to be changed into that which is changeable and perishable? The Adwaitists here have a theory which they call Vivarta Vada or apparent manifestation. According to the dualists and the Sankhyas, the whole of this universe is the evolution of primal nature. According to some of the Adwaitists and some of the dualists, the whole of this universe is evolved from God. And according to the Adwaitists proper, the followers of Sankaracharya, the whole uni-

verse is the *apparent* evolution of God. God is the material cause of this universe, but not really, only apparently. The celebrated illustration used is that of the rope and the snake, where the rope appeared to be the snake, but was not really so. The rope did not really change into the snake. Even so this whole universe as it exists is that Being. It is unchanged, and all the changes we see in it are only apparent. These changes are caused by Desa, Kala, and Nimitta (time, space, and causation), or, according to a higher psychological generalization, by Nama and Rupa (name and form). It is by name and form that one thing is differentiated from another. The name and form alone cause the difference. In reality they are one and the same. Again, it is not, the Vedantists say, that there is something as phenomenon and something as noumenon. The rope is changed into the snake only apparently; and when the delusion ceases, the snake vanishes. When one is in ignorance, he sees the phenomenon and does not see God. When he sees God, this universe vanishes entirely. Ignorance or Maya, as

it is called, is the cause of all this phenomenon,—the Absolute, the Unchangeable, being taken as this manifested universe. This Maya is not absolute zero, not non-existence. It is defined as neither existence nor non-existence. It is not existence, because that can be said only of the Absolute, the Unchangeable, and in this sense Maya is non-existence. Again it cannot be said it is non-existence ; for if it were, it could never produce the phenomenon. So it is something which is neither ; and in the Vedanta Philosophy it is called Anirvachaniya or inexpressible. Maya then is the real cause of this universe. Maya gives the name and form to what Brahman or God gives the material ; and the latter seems to have been transformed into all this. The Adwaitists, then, have no place for the individual soul They say individual souls are created by Maya. In reality they cannot exist. If there were only one existence throughout, how could it be that I am one, and you are one, and so forth ? We are all one, and the cause of evil is the perception of duality. As soon as I begin to feel that I

am separate from this universe, then first comes fear, and then comes misery. "Where one hears another, one sees another, that is small. Where one does not see another, where one does not hear another, that is the greatest, that is God. In that greatest is perfect happiness. In small things there is no happiness."[1]

According to the Adwaita Philosophy, then, this differentiation of matter, these phenomena, are, as it were, for a time hiding the real nature of man ; but the latter really has not been changed at all. In the lowest worm, as well as in the highest human being, the same divine nature is present. The worm form is the lower form, in which the divinity has been more overshadowed by Maya ; and that indeed is the highest form in which it has been least overshadowed. Behind everything the same divinity is existing, and out of this comes the basis of morality. Do not injure another. Love every one as your own self, because the whole universe is one. In injuring another, I am injuring myself ; in loving another, I am loving myself. From this also

1 Chandogya, VIIth Propathaka, 24, 1.

springs that principle of Adwaita morality which has been summed up in one word,—self-abnegation. The Adwaitist says this little personalized self is the cause of all my misery. This individualized self, which makes me different from all other beings, brings hatred and jealousy and misery, and struggles and all other evils. And when this idea has been got rid of, all struggle will cease, all misery vanish. So this is to be given up. We must always hold ourselves ready, even to give up our lives for the lowest beings. When a man has become ready even to give up his life for a little insect, he has reached the perfection which the Adwaitist wants to attain ; and at that moment when he has become thus ready, the veil of ignorance will be taken away from him, and he will feel his own nature. Even in this life he will feel that he is one with the universe. For a time, as it were, the whole of this phenomenal world will disappear for him, and he will realize what he is. But so long as the Karma of this body remains, he will have to live. This state, when the veil has vanished and yet the body remains for

some time, is what the Vedantists call the Jivan-mukti, the living freedom. If a man is deluded by a mirage for some time, but one day the mirage disappears,—if it comes back the next day or at some future time, he will not be deluded again. Before the mirage first broke, the man could not distinguish between the reality and the deception. But when it has broken, as long as he has organs and eyes to work with, he will have to see the image, but will no more be deluded. That fine distinction between actual world and the mirage, he has caught and the latter cannot delude him any more. So when the Vedantist has realized his own nature, the whole world has vanished for him. It will come back again, but never more the same world of misery. The prison of misery has become changed into Sat, Chit, Ananda,—Existence Absolute, Knowledge Absolute, Bliss Absolute,—and the attainment of this is the goal of the Adwaita philosophy.

DISCUSSION.

I should like to know something about the present activity of philosophic thought in India. To what extent are these questions discussed?

As I have said the majority of the Indian people are practically dualists, and the minority are monists. The main subject of discussion is Maya and Jiva. When I came to this country, I found that the laborers were informed of the present condition of politics; but when I asked them what is religion, and what are the doctrines of this and that particular sect, they said: "We do not know; we go to church." In India if I go to a peasant and ask him, "Who governs you?" he says, "I do not know; I pay my taxes." But if I ask him what is his religion, he says, "I am a dualist," and is ready to give you the details about Maya and Jiva. He cannot read or write, but he has learned all this from the monks, and is very fond of discussing it. After the day's work, the peasants sit under a tree and discuss these questions.

What does orthodoxy mean with the Hindus?

In modern times it simply means obeying certain caste laws as to eating, drinking, and marriage. After that the Hindu can believe in any system he likes. There was never an organised church in India; so there was never a body of men to formulate doctrines of orthodoxy. In a general way, we say that those who believe in the Vedas are orthodox; but in reality we find that many of the dualistic sects believe more in the Puranas[1] than in the Vedas.

What influence had your Hindu philosophy on the Stoic philosophy of the Greeks?

It is very probable that it had some influence on it through the Alexandrians. There is some suspicion of Pythagoras being influenced by the Sankhya thought. Any way, we think the Sankhya philosophy is the first attempt to harmonize the philosophy of the Vedas through reason. We find Kapila mentioned even in the Vedas,—"Thou who produced the sage Kapila."[2]

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1 Puranas, "old things,"—popular explanations of the Vedas.

2 Swetaswatara, Chap. V. 2.

What is the antagonism of this thought with Western science?

No antagonism at all. We are in harmony with it. Our theory of evolution and of Akasa and Prana is exactly what your modern philosophies have. Your belief in evolution is among our Yogis and in the Sankhya philosophy. For instance, Patanjali speaks of one species being changed into another by the infilling of nature[1]; only he differs from you in the explanation. His explanation of this evolution is spiritual. He says that, just as when a farmer wants to water his field from the canals that pass near, he has only to lift up his gate,—so each man is the Infinite already, only these bars and bolts of different circumstances shut him in, but as soon as these are removed, he rushes out and expresses himself. In the animal, the man was held in abeyance; but as soon as proper conditions came, he became manifested as man. And again, as soon as fitting conditions came, the God in man manifested itself. So we have very little to

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1 जात्यन्तरपरिणामः प्रकृत्यापूरात् ।

Patanjala Yogasutras, 2, Kaibalyapada.

quarrel with in the new theories. For instance, the theory of the Sankhya as to perception is very little different from modern physiology.

But your method is different.

Yes. We claim that concentrating the powers of the mind is the only way to knowledge. In external science, concentration of mind is putting it on something external ; and in internal science, it is drawing it in towards one's ownself. We call this concentration of mind, Yoga.

In the state of concentration does the truth of these principles become evident ?

The Yogis claim a good deal more. They claim that by concentration of the mind every truth in the universe becomes evident to the mind, both external and internal truth.

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The Adwaitist would say that all this cosmology and everything else is in Maya, or in the phenomenal world. In truth they do do not exist. But as long as we are bound, we have to see these visions. Within these visions things come in certain regular order. Beyond them there is no law and order, but freedom.

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The Upanishads not being in a systematized form, it was easy for philosophers to take up texts where they liked to form a system. Therefore the Upanishads had always to be taken, else there would be no basis. Yet in fact we find the basis of all the different schools of thought in the Upanishads. Our solution is that the Adwaita is not antagonistic to the dualistic. We say the latter is only one of the three necessary steps to attain to Truth or Religion. The first is dualism. Then man gets a higher state which might be designated as partial non-dualism. And at last he finds that he is one with the universe. Therefore the three do not contradict, but fulfil one another.

Why does Maya, or ignorance, exist ?

'Why' cannot be asked beyond the limit of causation. It can only be asked of an entity within Maya. So we say we will answer the question when it is logically formulated. Before that we have no right to answer.

Does the personal God belong to Maya ?

Yes ; but the personal God is the same

Absolute seen through Maya. That Absolute under the control of nature is what is called the human soul ; and the same when controlling nature is Iswara or the personal God. If a man starts from here to see the sun, he will see at first a little sun ; but as he proceeds he will see it bigger and bigger, until he reaches the real one. At each stage of his progress he was seeing apparently a different sun ; yet we are sure it was the same sun he was seeing. So all these things are but visions of the Absolute, and as such they are true. Not one is a false vision, but we can only say they were lower stages.

What is the special process by which one will come to know the Absolute ?

We say there are two processes. One is the positive, and the other the negative. The positive is that through which the whole universe is going,—that of love. If this circle of love is increased indefinitely, we reach the one universal love. The other is the Neti Neti,—"not this, not this,"—stopping every wave in the mind which tries to draw it out ; when at last the mind dies,

as it were, and the real discloses itself. We call that super-consciousness or Samadhi.

That would be, then, merging the subject in the object !

Merging the object in the subject, not merging the subject in the object. Really this world dies and I remain. I am the only one that remains.

Some of our philosophers in Germany have thought that the whole doctrine of Bhakti [love] in India was very likely the result of Occidental influence.

I do not take any stock in that,—the assumption was ephemeral. The Bhakti of India is not like the Western Bhakti. The central idea of ours is that there will be no thought of fear. It will always, be to love God. There is no worship through fear, but always through love, from beginning to end. That is our idea of Bhakti. In the second place, the assumption is quite unnecessary. Bhakti is spoken of in the oldest of the Upanishads, which is much older than the Christian era. The germs of Bhakti are in the Sanhita even [the Vedic hymns]. The word *Bhakti* is not a Western word. It was suggested by the word *Sraddha*.

What is the Indian idea of the Christian faith ?

That it is very good. The Vedanta will

take in every one. We have a peculiar idea in India. Suppose I had a child. I should not teach him any religion; I should teach him breathings,—the practice of concentrating the mind, and just one line of prayer, —not prayer in your sense, but simply, "I meditate on Him who is the Creator of this universe: may he enlighten my mind." That way he would be educated, and then go about hearing different philosophers and teachers. He would select one who he thought would suit him best; and this man would become his Guru or teacher, and he would become a Sishya or disciple. He would say to that man: "This form of philosophy which you preach is the best; so teach me." Our fundamental idea is that your doctrine cannot be mine, or mine yours. Each one must have his own way. My daughter may have one method and my son another, and I another. So each one has an Ishtam or chosen way, and we keep it to ourselves. It is between me and my teacher, because we do not want to create a fight. It will not help any one to tell it, because each one will have to find his own way. So

only general philosophy and general methods can be taught universally. For instance, giving a ludicrous example, it may help me to stand on one leg. It would be ludicrous to you if I said every one must do that, but it may suit me. It is quite possible for me to be a dualist, and for my wife to be a monist, and so on. One of my sons may worship Christ or Buddha or Mohammed, so long as he obeys the caste laws. That may be his own Ishtam.

Do all Hindus believe in caste ?

They are forced to. They may not believe, but they have to obey.

Are these exercises in breathing and concentration universally practised ?

Yes ; only some practise only a little, just to satisfy the requirements of their religion. The temples in India are not like the churches here. They may all vanish to-morrow, and will not be missed. A temple is built by a man who wants to go to heaven, or to get a son, or something of that sort. So he builds a large temple, and employs a few priests to hold services there. I need not go there at all, because all my

worship is in the home. In every house is a special room set apart, which is called the chapel. The first duty of the child, after his initiation, is to take a bath, and then to worship; and his worship consists of this breathing and meditating, and repeating of a certain name. And another thing is to hold the body straight. We believe that the mind has every power over the body to keep it healthy. After one has done this, then another comes and takes his seat, and each one does it in silence. Sometimes there are three or four in the same room, but each one may have a different method. This worship is repeated at least twice a day.

This state of oneness that you speak of, is it an ideal or something actually attained?

We say it is within actuality; we say we realize that state. If it were only in talk, it would be nothing. The Vedas teach three things: this Self is first to be heard, then to be reasoned, and then to be meditated. When a man first hears it, he must reason on it, so that he does not believe it ignorantly, but knowingly; and after reasoning what he is, he must meditate upon it,

and then realize it. And that is religion. Belief is no part of religion. We say religion is a super-conscious state.

If you ever reach that state, can you ever tell about it?

No; but we know it by its fruits. A man when he goes to sleep, comes out of sleep just as he was before. Another man goes into the state of perfect meditation called samadhi and when he comes out he is a philosopher, a sage, great man. That shows the difference between these two states.

I should like to ask, in continuation of Professor——'s question, whether you know of any people who have made study of the principles of self-hypnotism, which they undoubtedly practised to a great extent in ancient India, and what has been recently stated and practised in that thing? Of course you do not have it so much in modern India.

What you call hypnotism in the West is only a part of the real thing. The Hindus call it self-de-hypnotization. They say you are hypnotized already, and that you should get out of it and de-hypnotize yourself. "There the sun cannot illume, nor the moon nor the stars; the flash of lightning cannot illume that; what to speak of this mortal fire. That shining, everything else shines."[1]

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1 Kātha II, 15; Mundaka, II, 2, 10, also in Swetaswetarn.

That is not hypnotization, but de-hypnotization. We say that every other religion that preaches these things of the senses as real in some way or other is practising a form of hypnotism. It is the Adwaitist alone that does not care to be hypnotized. His is the only system that more or less understands that hypnotism comes with every form of dualism. But the Adwaitist says, throw away even the Vedas, throw away even the personal God, throw away even the universe, throw away even your own body and mind, and let nothing remain, in order to get rid of hypnotism perfectly. "From where the mind comes back, being unable to reach with speech, knowing Brahman, no more is then fear."[1] That is de-hypnotization. "I have neither vice nor virtue nor misery nor happiness ; I have neither the Vedas nor sacrifices nor ceremonies ; I am neither food nor eating nor eater, for I am Existence Absolute, Knowledge Absolute, Bliss Absolute ; I am He, I am He."[2] We know all about hypno-

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1 Taittiriya, 2nd Balli, 9.

2 Compare, 3rd verse in Nirvana-shatka of Sankeracharya.

tism. We have a psychology which the West is just beginning to know, but not yet adequately, I am sorry to say.

What do you call the astral body?

The astral body is what we call the Linga Sharira. When this body dies, how can it come to take another body? Force cannot remain without matter. So a little part of the fine matter remains, through which the internal organs make another body,—for each one is making his own body; it is the mind that makes the body. If I become a sage, my brain gets changed into a sage's brain; and the Yogis say that even in this life a Yogi can change his body into a god-body.

The Yogis show many wonderful things. One ounce of practice is worth a thousand pounds of theory. So I have no right to say that because I have not seen this or that thing done it is wrong. Their books say that with practice you can get all sorts of results that are most wonderful. Small results can be obtained in a short time by regular practice; so that one may know that there is no hum-

bug about it, no charlatanism. And these Yogis explain the very wonderful things mentioned in all scriptures in a scientific way. The question is, how these records of miracles entered into every nation. The man who says that they are all false, and need no explanation, is not rational. You have no right to deny them until you can prove them false. You must prove that they are without any foundation, and only then have you the right to stand up and deny them. But you have not done that. On the other hand, the Yogis say they are not miracles, and they claim that they can do them even to-day. Many wonderful things are done in India to-day. But none of them are done by miracles. There are many books on the subject. Again, if nothing else has been done in that line except a scientific approach towards psychology, that credit must be given to the Yogis.

Can you say in the concrete what the manifestations are which the Yogi can show ?

The Yogi wants no faith or belief in his science but that which is given to any other science, just enough gentlemanly faith to

come and make the experiment. The ideal of the Yogi is tremendous. I have seen the lower things that can be done by the power of the mind, and therefore I have no right to disbelieve that the highest things can be done. The ideal of the Yogi is eternal peace and love through omniscience and omnipotence. I know a Yogi who was bitten by a cobra, and who fell down on the ground. In the evening he revived again, and when asked what happened, he said: "A messenger came from my beloved." All hatred and anger and jealousy have been burned out of this man. Nothing can make him react; he is infinite love all the time, and he is omnipotent in his power of love. That is the real Yogi. And this manifesting different things is accidental, on the way. That is not what he wants to attain. The Yogi says, every man is a slave except the Yogi. He is a slave to food, to air, to his wife, to his children, to a dollar,—slave to a nation, slave to name and fame, and to a thousand things in this world. The man who is not controlled by any one of these bondages is alone a real man, a real Yogi.

"They have conquered heaven in this life who are firm fixed in this sameness. God is pure and the same to all. Therefore such are said to be fixed in God."[1]

Do the Yogis attach any importance to caste?

No; caste is only the training school for undeveloped minds.

Is there no connection between this idea of super-consciousness and the heat of India.

I do not think so; because all this philosophy might have been thought out fifteen thousand feet above the level of the sea among the Himalayas in an almost Arctic temperature.

Is it practicable to attain success in a cold climate?

It is practicable, and the only thing that is practicable in this world. We say you are a born Vedantist, each one of you. You are declaring your oneness with everything each moment you live. Every time that your heart goes out towards the world, you are a true Vedantist, only you do not know it. You are moral without knowing why; and the Vedanta is the philosophy which

1 Bhagabad-Gita,—Chapter V, 19.

analyzed and taught man to be moral consciously. It is the essence of all religions.

Should you say that there is an unsocial principle in our Western people which makes us so pluralistic, and that Eastern people are more sympathetic than we are?

I think the Western people are more cruel, and the Eastern people have mercy towards all beings. But that is simply because your civilization is very much more recent. It takes time to make a people come under the influence of mercy. You have a great deal of power; but heart-culture has not progressed equally along with this acquisition of power, and the power of control of the mind has especially been very little practised. It will take time to make you gentle and good. This feeling tingles in every drop of blood in India. If I go to the villages to teach the people politics, they will not understand; but if I go to teach them Vedanta, they say: "Now, Swami, you are all right." That Vairagyam, "non-attachment," is everywhere in India, even to-day. We are very much degenerated now; but kings will give up their thrones and go about the country without anything.

In some places the common village girl with her spinning-wheel says : "Do not talk to me of dualism ; my spinning-wheel says So'ham, So'ham, 'I am He, I am He.'" Go and talk to these people, and ask them why it is that they speak so and yet kneel before that stone. They will say that with you religion means dogma, but with them realization. "I will be a Vedantist," one of them will say, "only when all this has vanished, and I have seen the reality. Until then there is no difference between me and the ignorant. So I am using these stones, and am going to temples, and so on, to come to realization. I have heard, but I want to see and realize." "Different methods of speech, different manners of explaining the methods of the scriptures,—these are only for the enjoyment of the learned, not for freedom."[1] (Sankara). It is realization which leads us to that freedom.

Is this spiritual freedom among the people consistent with attention to caste ?

Certainly not. They say there should be no caste. Even those who are in caste

1. Vivekachuramani of Sankaracharya, Sl.—60.

say it is not a very perfect institution. But they say, when you find us another and a better one, we will give it up. They say, what will you give us instead ? Where is there not caste ? In your nation you are struggling all the time to make a caste. As soon as a man gets a bag of dollars, he says, "I am one of the Four Hundred." We alone have succeeded in making a permanent caste. Other nations are struggling and do not succeed. We have superstitions and evils enough. Would taking the superstitions and evils from your country mend matters ? It is owing to caste that three hundred millions of people can find a piece of bread to eat yet. It is an imperfect institution, no doubt. But if it had not been for caste, you would have had no Sanskrit books to study. This caste made walls, around which all sorts of invasions rolled and surged, but found it impossible to break through. That necessity has not gone yet, so caste remains. The caste we have now is not that of seven hundred years ago. Every blow has riveted it. Do you realize that India is the only country that never went outside of itself to

conquer ? The great emperor Asoka insisted that none of his descendants should go to conquer. If people want to send us teachers, let them help, but not injure. Why should all these people come to conquer the Hindus ? Did they do any injury to any nation ? What little good they could do, they did for the world. They taught it science, philosophy, religion, and civilized the savage hordes of the earth. And this is the return,—only murder and tyranny, and calling them heathen rascals. Look at the books written in India by Western people, and at the stories of many travellers who go there ; in retaliation for what injuries are these hurled at them ?

You are philosophers, and you do not think that a bag of gold makes the difference between man and man. What is the value of all these machines and sciences ? They have only one result : they spread knowledge. You have not solved the problem of want, but only made it keener. Machines do not solve the poverty question ; they simply make men struggle the more. Competition gets keener. What value has nature in

itself? Why do you go and build a monument to a man who sends electricity through a wire? Does not nature do that millions of times over? Is not everything already existing in nature? What is the value of your getting it? It was already there. The only value is that it makes this development. This universe is simply a gymnasium in which the soul is taking exercise; and after these exercises we become gods. So the value of everything is to be decided by how far it is a manifestation of God. Civilization is the manifestation of that divinity in man.

Have the Buddhists any caste laws?

The Buddhists never had much caste, and there are very few Buddhists in India. Buddha was a social reformer. Yet in Buddhistic conntries I find that there have been strong attempts to manufacture caste, only they have failed. The Buddhists' caste is practically nothing, but they take pride in it in their own minds.

Buddha was one of the Sannyasins of the Vedanta. He started a new sect, just as others are started even to-day. The

ideas which now are called Buddhism were not his. They were much more ancient. He was a great man who gave the ideas power. The unique element in Buddhism was its social element.

Brahmans and Kshatriyas have always been our teachers, and most of the Upanishads were written by Kshatriyas, while the ritualistic portions of the Vedas came from the Brahmans. Most of our great teachers throughout India have been Kshatriyas, and were always universal in their teachings; whilst the Brahman prophets with two exceptions were very exclusive. Rama, Krishna, and Buddha,—worshipped as incarnations of God,—were Kshatriyas.

When a man realizes, he gives up everything. The various sects and ceremonies and books, so far as they are the means of arriving at that point, are all right. But when they fail in that, we must change them. "The knowing one must not despise the condition of the ignorant, nor should the knowing one destory the faith of the ignorant in their own particular method, but by proper action

lead them, and show them the path to where he stands."[1]

The real individual is the Absolute; this personalization is through Maya. It is only apparent; in reality it is always the Absolute. In reality there is one, but in Maya that is appearing as many. In Maya there is this variation. Yet even in this Maya there is always the tendency to get back to the one, as expressed in all ethics and all morality of every nation, because it is the constitutional necessity of the soul. It is finding its oneness; and this struggle to find this oneness is what we call ethics and morality. Therefore we must always practise them.

Is not the greater part of ethics taken up with the relation between individuals?

That is all that it is. The Absolute does not come within Maya.

You say the individual is the Absolute, and I was going to ask you whether the individual has knowledge.

The state of manifestation is individuality, and the light in that state is what we call knowledge. To use, therefore, this term *knowledge* for the light of the Absolute is

1 Bhagabad—Gita. Chapter III., 26.

not precise, as the Absolute state transcends relative knowledge.

Does it include it ?

Yes ; in this sense. Just as a piece of gold can be changed into all sorts of coins, so with this. The state can be broken up into all sorts of knowledge. It is the state of super-consciousness, and includes both consciousness and unconsciousness. The man who attains that state has all that we call knowledge. When he wants to realize that consciousness or knowledge, he has to go a step lower. Knowledge is a lower state ; it is only in Maya that we can have knowledge.

ANSWERS AND SELECTIONS.

1. PERSONALLY I take as much of the Vedas as agrees with reason. Parts of the Vedas are apparently contradictory. The Vedas are not considered to be inspired in the Western sense of the word, but as the sum total of the knowledge of God, omniscience. This knowledge comes out at the beginning of a cycle and manifests itself; and when the cycle ends, it goes down into potential form. When the cycle is projected again, that knowledge is projected along with it. So far the theory is all right, But that only in these books which are called the Vedas exists all this knowledge is mere sophistry. Manu says in one place that that part of the Vedas which agrees with reason is the Vedas, and nothing else. Many of our philosophers have taken this view.

2. All the criticism against the Adwaita philosophy can be summed up in this:—that it does not conduce to sense enjoyments; and we are glad to admit that.

3. The Vedanta system begins with

tremendous pessimism, and ends with real optimism. We deny the sense optimism, but assert the real optimism of the supersensuous—that real happiness is not in the senses, but above the senses ; and that it is in every man. The sort of optimism which we see in the world is what will lead to ruin through the senses.

4. Abnegation has the greatest importance in philosophy. Such negation implies affirmation of the Real Self. It is pessimistic so far as it negates the world of the senses, but it is optimistic in its assertion of the real world.

5. Of all the scriptures of the world, it is the Vedas alone that declare that even the study of the Vedas is secondary, The real study is that "by which we *realize* the Unchangeable."[1] And that is neither reading, nor believing, nor reasoning, but superconscious perception or Samadhi.

6. WHAT IS THE CAUSE OF THE ILLUSION ? The question has been asked for the last three thousand years ; and the only answer is, when the world is able to formulate a

1 Mundaka, I—5.

logical question, we will answer it. The question is contradictory. Our position is that the Absolute has become this relative only apparently, that the unconditioned has become the conditioned only in Maya. By the very admission of the unconditioned, we admit that the Absolute cannot be acted upon by anything else. It is uncaused, which means that nothing outside itself can act upon it. First of all, if it is unconditioned, it cannot have been acted upon by anything else. In the unconditioned there cannot be time, space, or causation. That granted, your question will be: "What caused that which cannot be caused by anything, to be changed into this?" Your question is only possible in the conditioned. But you take it out of the conditioned, and want to ask it in the unconditioned. Only when the unconditioned becomes conditioned, and space, time, and causation come in, can such question be asked. We can only say ignorance makes the illusion. The question is impossible. Nothing can have worked in the Absolute. There was no cause. Not that we do not know, or that we are ignorant

but it is above knowledge, and cannot be brought down to the plane of knowledge. We can use the words "I do not know" in two senses, In one way they mean that we are lower than knowledge, and in the other way that the thing is above knowledge. The X-rays have become known now. The very causes of these are disputed, but we are sure that we shall know them. Here we can say we do not know about the X-rays. But about the Absolute we cannot know. In the case of the X-rays we do not know, although it is within the range of knowledge; only we do not know it yet. But, in the other case, it is so much beyond knowledge that it ceases to be a matter of knowing. "By what means can the knower be known?"[1] You are always yourself, and cannot objectify yourself. This was one of the arguments used by our philosophers to prove immortality. If I try to think I am lying dead, what have I to imagine? That I am standing and looking down at myself,

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1. Brihadaranyaka, chapter II Bráhman 14. or Chapter I Bráhman, 15.

at some dead body. So that I cannot objectify myself.

7. EVOLUTION. In the matter of the projection of Akasa and Prana into maifested form, and the return to fine state, there is a good deal of similarity between Indian thought and modern science. The moderns have their evolution, and so have the Yogis. But I think that the Yogis' explanation of evolution is the better one. "The change of one species into another is attained by the infilling of nature." The basic idea is that we are changing from one species to another, and that man is the highest species. Patanjali explains this "infilling of nature" by the simile of peasants irrigating fields.[1] Our education and progression simply mean taking away the obstacles, and by its own nature the divinity will manifest itself. This does away with all the struggle for existence. The miserable experiences of life are simply in the way, and can be eliminated entirely. They are not necessary for evolution. Even if they did not exist, we should progress. It is in the very nature of things to

1 Pátanjala, Yogasutras : Chap. 4, 2—3.

manifest themselves. The momentum is not from outside, but comes from inside. Each soul is the sum total of the universal experiences already coiled up there ; and of all these experiences only those will come out which find suitable circumstances. So the external things can only give us the environments. These competitions and struggles and evils that we see are not the necessary effect of the involution as the cause, but they are in the way. If they did not exist, still man would go on and evolve as God, because it is the very nature of that God to come out and manifest Himself. To my mind this seems very hopeful, instead of that horrible idea of competition. The more I study history, the more I find that idea to be wrong. Some say that if man did not fight with man, he would not progress. I used to think so ; but I find now that every war has thrown back human progress by fifty years instead of hurrying it forward. The day will come when men will study history from a different light, and find that competition is neither the cause nor the effect, simply a thing on the way, not necessary to evolution at all.

The theory of Patanjali is the only theory I think a rational man can accept. How much evil the modern system causes! Every wicked man has a license to be wicked under it. I have seen in this country physicists who say that all criminals ought to be exterminated, and that that is the only way in which criminality can be eliminated from society. Environments can hinder, but they are not necessary to progress. The most horrible thing about the theory of competition is not that one may not conquer the environments, but that where one may conquer, thousands are crowded out. So it is evil at best. That cannot be good which helps only one and hinders the majority. Patanjali says that these struggles remain only through our ignorance, and are not necessary, and are not part of the evolution of man. It is just our impatience which creates them. We have not the patience to go and work our way out. For instance, there is a fire in a theatre, and only a few escape. The rest in trying to rush out crush each other down. That crush was not necessary for the salvation of the

building, nor of the two or three who escaped. If all had gone out slowly, not one would have been hurt. That is the case in life. The doors are open for us, and we can all get out without the competition and struggle ; and yet we struggle. The struggle we create through our own ignorance, through impatience ; we are in too great a hurry. The highest manifestation of strength is to keep ourselves calm and on our own feet.

8. Each soul is a circle. The centre is where the body is, and the activity is manifested there. You are omnipresent, though you have the consciousness of being concentrated in only one point. That point has taken up particles of matter, and formed them into a machine to express itself. That through which it expresses itself is called the body. You are everywhere. When one body or machine fails you, the centre moves on and takes up other particles of matter, finer or grosser, and works through them. Here is man. And what is God ? God is a circle, with circumference nowhere, and centre everywhere. Every point in that circle is

living, conscious, active, and equally working. With our limited souls, only one point is conscious, and that point moves forward and backward.

Soul is a circle whose circumference is nowhere (limitless), but whose centre is in some body. Death is but a change of centre. God is a circle whose circumference is nowhere, and whose centre is everywhere. When we can get out of the limited centre of body, we shall realize God, our true Self.

9. Each soul is potentially divine. The goal is to manifest the divinity within, by controlling nature, external and internal. Do this either by work, or worship, or psychic control, or philosophy,—by one or more or all these,—and be free. This is the whole of religion. Doctrines, or dogmas, or rituals, or books, or temples, or forms are but secondary details.

10. Jnanam [knowledge] is "creedlessness;" but that does not mean that it despises creeds. It only means that a stage above and beyond creeds has been gained. The Jnani [true philosopher] strives to destroy nothing, but to help all. All rivers

roll their waters into the sea and become one. So all creeds should lead to Jnanam and become one.

Jnanam teaches that the world should be renounced, but not on that account abandoned. To live in the world and be not of it, is the true test of renunciation.

11. The Vedantist says that a man is neither born nor dies nor goes to heaven, and that reincarnation is really a myth with regard to the soul. The example is given of a book being turned over. It is the book that evoloves, not the man. Every soul is omnipresent, so where can it come or go ? These births and deaths are changes in nature which we are mistaking for changes in us.

12. Reincarnation is the evolution of nature and the manifestation of the God within.

13. The Vedanta says that each life is built upon the past, and that when we can look back over the whole past we are free. The desire to be free will take the form of a religious disposition from childhood. A few years will, as it were, make all truth clear to one. After leaving this life, and

while waiting for the next, a man is still in the phenomenal.

14. The struggle never had meaning for the man who is free. But for us it has a meaning, because it is name and form that create the world.

15. I cannot see how it can be otherwise than that all knowledge is stored up in us from the beginning. If you and I are little waves in the ocean, then that ocean is the background.

16. We would describe the soul in these words: "This soul the sword cannot cut, nor the spear pierce; him the fire cannot burn, nor water melt; indestructible, omnipresent is this soul. Therefore weep not for it."[1]

17. If one has been very bad, we believe that one will become good in time to come. The fundamental principle is that there is eternal freedom for every one. Every one must come to it. We have to struggle, impelled by our desires to be free. Every other desire but that to be free is illusive. Every good action, the Vedantist says, is a manifestation of that freedom.

1 Bhagabat Gita—Chapter II. 23.

I do not believe that there will come a time when all the evil in the world will vanish. How could it be? This stream is going on. Masses of water go out at one end, but masses are ready at the other end.

The Vedanta says that you are pure and perfect, that there is a state beyond good and evil, and that is your own nature. It is higher even than good. Good is only a lesser differentiation than evil.

18. We have no theory of evil. We call it ignorance.

19. So far as it goes, all dealing with other people, all ethics, are in the phenomenal world.

As a most complete statement of truth, we would not think of applying such a thing as ignorance to God. Of Him we say that He is Existence, Knowledge, and Bliss Abso lute. Every effort of thought and speech will make the Absolute phenomenal and break its character.

20. There is one thing to be remembered : that the assertion[1] cannot be made

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1 The question here put forward evidently was about identifying man with God.

with regard to the sense-world. . If you say in the sense-world that you are God, what is there to prevent your doing wrong? So the affirmation of your divinity applies only to the noumenal. If I am God, I am beyond the tendencies of the senses, and will not do evil. Morality of course is not the goal of man but the means through which this freedom is attained. The Vedanta says that Yoga is one way that makes men realize this divinity. The Vedanta says that this is done by the realization of the freedom within, and that everything will give way to that. Morality and ethics will all range themselves in their proper places.

21. We have a place for struggle in the Vedanta, but not for fear. All fears will vanish when you begin to assert your own nature. If you think that you are bound, bound you will remain. If you think you are free, free you will be.

22. That sort of freedom which we feel when we are yet in the phenomenal is a glimpse of the real, but not just the real.

23. There is really no difference between matter, mind, and spirit. They are

only different phases of experiencing the one. This very world is seen by the five senses as matter, by the very wicked as hell, by the good as heaven, and by the perfect as God.

24. The Vedanta recognizes the reasoning power of man a good deal, although it says there is something higher than intellect; but the road lies through intellect.

25. If we can stop all thought, then we know that we are beyond thought. We come to this by negation. When every phenomenon has been negated, whatever remains, that is our real nature. That cannot be expressed, cannot be manifested, because the manifestation will again be will.

26. It is true that we create a system, but have to admit that it is not perfect, because the reality must be beyond all systems. We are ready to compare it with other systems, and are ready to show that this is the only rational system that can be; but it is not perfect because reason is not perfect. It is, however, the only possible rational system that the human mind can conceive.

It is true to a certain extent that a system must disseminate itself to be strong. No system has disseminated itself so much as the Vedanta. It is the personal contact that teaches even now. This mass of reading does not make men; those who were real men were made by personal contact. It is true that there are very few of these real men, but they will increase. Yet one cannot believe that there will come a day when we shall all be philosophers. We do not believe that there will ever come a time when there will be all happiness and no unhappiness.

27. The Vedanta philosophy is the foundation of Buddhism and everything else in India; but what we call the Adwaita philosophy of the modern school has a great many conclusions of the Buddhists. Of course the Hindus will not admit that,—that is, the orthodox Hindus, because to them the Buddhists are heretics. But there is a conscious attempt to stretch out the whole doctrine to include the heretics also.

28. The Vedanta has no quarrel with Buddhism. The idea of the Vedanta is to

harmonize all. With the northern Buddhists we have no quarrel at all. But the Burmese and Siamese and all the southern Buddhists say that there is a phenomenal world, and ask what right we have to create a noumenal world behind this. The answer of the Vedanta is that this is a false statement. The Vedanta never contended that there is a noumenal and a phenomenal. There is one. Seen through the senses it is phenomenal, but it is realy the noumenal all the time. The man who sees the rope does not see the snake. It is either the rope or the snake, but never the two. So the Buddhistic statement of our position that we believe there are two worlds is entirely false. They have the right to say it is the phenomenal if they like, but no right to contend that other men have not the right to say it is the noumenal.

29. WILL. Buddhism does not want to have phenomena. In phenomena alone is there desire according to this and it is desire that is creating all this. Modern Vedantists do not hold this at all. We say there is something which has become the will. Will is a manufactured something, a compound, not a

simple. There cannot be any will without an external object. Thus we see that the very position, that will has created this universe, is impossible. How could it? Have you ever known will without external stimulus? Desire cannot arise without stimulus, or, in modern philosophic language, nerve stimulus. Will is a sort of reaction of the brain, what the Sankhya philosophers call Buddhi. This reaction must be preceded by action, and action presupposes an external universe. When there is no external universe, naturally there will be no will; and yet, according to your theory, it is will that created the universe. Who creates the will? Will is coexistent with the universe. Will is one phenomenon out of many caused by the same impulse which has created the universe. But philosophy must not stop there. Will is entirely personal therefore we cannot go with Schopenhauer at all. Will is a compound,—a mixture of the internal and the external. Suppose a man were born without any senses, he would have no will at all. It requires something from outside, and the brain will then get some energy from inside

and will then becomes manifested. Therefore will is a compound, as much a compound as the manifest wall or anything else. We do not agree with the will theory of these German philosophers at all. Will itself is phenomenal, and cannot be the Absolute. It is one of the many projections. There is something which is not will, but is manifesting itself as will. That I can understand. But that will is manifesting itself as everything else, I do not understand, seeing that we cannot have any conception of will, as separate from the universe. When that freedom becomes will, it is caused by time, space, and causation. Take Kant's analysis. Will is within time, space, and causation. Then how can it be the Absolute? One cannot will without willing in time.

30. We cannot bring it to sense demonstration that Brahman is the only real thing; but we can point out that this is the only conclusion that can be come to. For instance, there must be this oneness in everything, even in common things. There is the human generalization, for example. We say that all the variety is created by name